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# FINANCIAL TIMES

Europe's Business Newspaper

## More than 100 feared dead after El Al jet hits flats

Twelve bodies were recovered and more than 100 people were feared dead after an Israeli El Al jumbo cargo jet crashed into two high-rise blocks of flats on the outskirts of Amsterdam. The aircraft reported two of its four engines on fire 10 minutes after taking off from Schiphol airport for Tel Aviv. It crashed four minutes later six miles from the city centre. Page 2.

**Ceasefire agreed:** Mozambique president Joaquim Chissano and Afonso Dhlakama, leader of the Mozambique National Resistance movement, signed a treaty to end ended the country's 16-year civil war, which has left over 1m people dead.

Page 16

**Spain's prime minister calls for EC unity** Spanish prime minister Felipe González (left) called on European Community leaders meeting at next week's Birmingham summit to focus on restoring EC political unity rather than becoming bogged down in debate over the Exchange Rate Mechanism. Page 16; Madrid considers

interest rate rise, Page 2; Felipe González interview, Page 14; Bonds, Page 29

**Trafalgar plans changes** Property construction and engineering group Trafalgar House, under siege from Hongkong Land, is expected to change its accounting policies. The move follows an investigation by the Financial Reporting Review Panel concerning the reclassification of £102.7m (\$182.5m) worth of development properties as fixed assets. Page 17

**Priison riot leaves 111 dead** At least 111 inmates died in São Paulo in the worst prison violence in Brazilian history. Page 2

**Angolan president's victory** The US and western observers to Angola's peace process tried to defuse tension in the rebel Unita movement as it became clear that President José Eduardo dos Santos and the ruling MPLA party had won the war-tattered country's first democratic elections. Page 5

**Honour for Sony chief** Britain is to bestow an honorary knighthood on Sony Corp chairman Akio Morita, champion of deeper Anglo-Japanese ties. Page 4

**Banks examine Italian debt plans** Banks have reacted with cautious interest to an Italian government plan to set up a fund to use the proceeds from privatisation to buy back state debt. Page 17

**UK companies tell most** British companies disclose more financial information and data on social issues than their overseas competitors, according to a survey of the annual reports of leading quoted companies from nine countries. Swedish companies provide most detail in their operational reviews and Italian ones least. Page 17

**Hid for French print plants** Quebecor of Canada, North America's second biggest commercial printer, is negotiating to buy three printing plants in France, including one formerly owned by Maxwell Communication Corporation. Page 18

**Looking to China** Sun Hung Kai Properties, Hong Kong property developer, posted a 40 per cent increase in profits to HK\$1.68bn (US\$631m) in the year to June. The company said it intended that 10 per cent of its business should be generated from works in China. Page 18

**European monetary system** The resilient French franc keeps company with the strongest currencies in the European Exchange Rate Mechanism grid. The Bundesbank's decision not to cut its short-term rates keeps the bottom four under threat of devaluation. The Spanish peseta ended the week close to its ERM floor against the D-Mark, while the Irish punt touched its floor twice. These currencies, and the Portuguese escudo, have been saved from devaluation only by the re-imposition of capital controls. Page 18

**EMS Grid** October 2, 1992

Guilder  
B-Franc  
D-Mark  
F-Franc  
D-Krone  
Punt  
Escudo  
Peseta

-1% 0 1% 2% 3%

The chart shows the member currencies of the exchange rate mechanism measured against the weakest currency in the EMS's narrow 2.25 per cent fluctuation band. In practice currencies in the narrow band cannot rise more than 2.25 per cent from the weakest currency in that part of the system. The Spanish peseta and Portuguese escudo operate with 6 per cent fluctuation bands.

**Riots in Mauritania** Riots broke out in Nouakchott, capital of Mauritania, in protest against sharp price rises and a sudden fall in the value of the ouguiya, the Mauritanian currency.

**Cheaper abroad** A Nissan car made in Britain and shipped 10,500 miles to Japan costs £2,840 (\$5,056) less in Tokyo than a similar model for sale in the UK. Page 16



United against racism: About 10,000 demonstrators in Berlin protested against race discrimination at the weekend on the second anniversary of German reunification. Marchers carried placards urging, 'Hands off the right of asylum'. German president appeals for solidarity. Page 2

## Sterling's fate to dominate market

By Terry Byland in London

**THE FORTUNES** of sterling will this week dominate UK financial markets where confidence that UK base rates can be reduced to 8 per cent by the year-end has been badly shaken by the month's emergency summit in Birmingham.

Predictions from many analysts in London that base rates might be cut by a further point from their present 8 per cent level to coincide with this week's Conservative party conference were effectively withdrawn on Friday afternoon when the pound appeared close to free fall.

The Bundesbank's decision that day to leave German rates unchanged is likely to keep sterling under pressure.

The political tensions awaiting Mr John Major, the UK prime minister, and Mr Norman Lamont, his chancellor, at the conference will also increase uncertainty in a stock market still seeking clarification of the government's economic strategy after sterling's departure from the exchange rate mechanism.

The retail price index for August, due on Friday, is expected to show a continued moderation in inflationary pressures, says Mr Brian Hilliard at stockbroker Strauss Turnbull. Under more settled conditions, this might have renewed hopes of a base-rate cut.

The stock market will also watch for recovery in the US currency which would aid UK dollar-earning export stocks.

Mr Lamont, who is preparing for a crucial speech to the party

## Major prepared to defer debate on ERM reform

Page 2

■ EC ministers in push to bolster trust  
■ Madrid considers increase in interest rates

■ Ministers back PM ...Page 6  
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conference on Thursday, has said he would reverse if necessary the 1 percentage point reduction in borrowing costs which followed sterling's departure from the ERM. But an increase now could undermine fatally his position in the cabinet.

Mr Clarke's views were echoed by Mr Michael Heseltine, the president of the Board of Trade, in a reminder to party activists who gather in Brighton tomorrow that the pound's devaluation will mean tougher controls on public spending.

Mr Heseltine, however, sought to dispel suggestions that the government is already considering raising income tax to reduce a public sector deficit forecast at more than £40bn (£71.2bn) next year. In practice, ministers will not rule out an extension of value added tax to areas such as domestic fuel and newspapers, but Mr Heseltine described the option of higher taxes as "the least attractive to a Conservative government".

But a warning by Mr Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, that sterling's recent slide could not be allowed to continue indefinitely reinforced fears among nervous Tory MPs that Mr Norman Lamont could be forced to raise interest rates.

Mr Lamont, who is preparing for a crucial speech to the party

much greater impetus behind his demand for repair of the "fault-lines" in the ERM than is publicly acknowledged by many governments.

But the prime minister acknowledges that those governments whose currencies have been under speculative attack, including France, cannot afford to admit publicly that the mechanism is fundamentally flawed.

The Birmingham summit is therefore expected to give the go-ahead for a series of low-key technical discussions.

Meanwhile domestic political pressures on Mr Major were highlighted yesterday by two opinion polls on his performance.

The 32 per cent satisfaction rating found by Mori, the polling organisation, for The Sunday Times, and the 34-point satisfaction rating according to Gallup in the Sunday Telegraph are sharply down on Mr Major's previous scores.

## Japanese recovery plan 'not enough on its own'

By Charles Leadbeater in Tokyo

THE emergency public spending package announced by the Japanese government in August will not be enough to stimulate a recovery in Japan's ailing economy, the senior policymaker in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party warned at the weekend.

Mr Yoshiro Mori said the Y10,700bn package would have to be accompanied by other measures to stimulate the economy, which he said was in such a depressed state that the government would have to use public spending as a stimulus for several years.

Mr Mori's comments are the closest LDP leaders have come to admitting that the package was insufficient to generate a recovery. His assessment contradicts a consensus among officials and many Japanese economists that the emergency spending will create a recovery by the middle of next year.

Mr Mori told a weekend seminar of LDP politicians that the government should expand borrowing to finance higher spending as the downturn in the economy will reduce tax revenues.

Debate about Japan's fiscal policy is increasingly likely to extend beyond details of how to finance the emergency package and is set to encompass how higher spending should be paid for.

The Finance Ministry is against borrowing in order to finance a supplementary budget although it is prepared for a limited increase in borrowing through so-called construction bonds which are linked to public investment. However, it is firmly opposed to special deficit financing bonds as it fears this could open the way for politicians to continue to press for higher borrowing even when the economy has recovered.

Higher borrowing during the recession of the mid-1970s led to a marked deterioration in Japan's public finances. Increased bor-

Continued on Page 16

Pressure on LDP over Kanemaru fines, Page 4

Dozens hurt in Osaka slum clashes, Page 4

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## NEWS: INTERNATIONAL

Talks to lay groundwork for emergency summit

## EC ministers in push to restore trust

By Lionel Barber  
In Brussels

EUROPEAN foreign ministers will today seek to restore a climate of trust among member states shaken by the Anglo-German rift and turmoil in the money markets.

During two days of talks in Luxembourg, the Twelve will lay the groundwork for the emergency EC summit in Birmingham on October 16. The goal is to reinforce an emerging consensus on early ratification of the Maastricht treaty, to dispel uncertainty about the currency's future.

A prime topic on the agenda will be subsidiarity - the codeword for devolving decision-making to member states at national and regional level. Larger states, led by Britain, France and Germany, are at loggerheads with the smaller nations who want to prevent attacks on the powers of the European Commission, their traditional protector.

The Council of Ministers will also deal with pressing trade issues, including prospects for progress on the Gatt multilateral trade talks ahead of meetings with US negotiators scheduled for next weekend.

EC ministers hope to show the rest of the world that the Community has not been paralysed by the political and economic divisions which have surfaced in the wake of last month's lukewarm endorsement of the Maastricht treaty in a French referendum.

The British government, too, is under pressure to deliver results as chairman of the rotating EC presidency. Some member states have been dismayed by divisions on Europe within the ruling Conservative party, while others have expressed private frustration with the high-handedness of

THE DANISH prime minister and a prominent opposition leader have sharply criticised Mr Martin Bangemann, German member of the European Commission, for suggesting at the weekend that the European Community needs a mechanism for expelling member states which do not want to pursue further European integration, writes Hilary Barnes in Copenhagen.

Prime Minister Poul Schlüter said: "I would advise Mr Bangemann to look after his own job and leave the decisions to the 12 member governments." Social Democratic party foreign affairs spokesman Björn Westh labelled Mr Bangemann's remarks as "despotic arrogance".

Some British ministers, notably Mr Norman Lamont, Chancellor of the Exchequer, reacted to the imposition of exchange controls by staging a massive exodus from the Spanish debt and equity markets. The general index at the Madrid stock market ended last week at its lowest level in six years.

Both Mr Solchaga and Prime Minister Felipe González insisted in interviews last week that the controls were temporary. Other senior officials were suggesting on Friday that they would be relaxed "in a matter of days".

Madrid, though, will not lift the controls completely. It would want any rate rise to be seen as a response to bond market pressure and not an attempt to defend the peseta. If the latter were the case, the Spanish authorities fear being drawn into a speculative spiral similar to the one which forced sterling out of the Exchange Rate Mechanism.

Nevertheless, it might use a "technical" interest rate rise to test market reaction, while holding a minimum of capital controls in reserve in case downward pressure on the peseta continues.

See International Capital Markets

## President calls for German solidarity

By Quentin Peel in Bonn

PRESIDENT Richard von Weizsäcker of Germany warned this weekend that the country's democratic structure would be threatened by a failure to revive the east German economy and to cope peacefully with an influx of foreigners.

In a sweeping appeal for national solidarity and understanding, delivered on the second anniversary of German unification, he called on west Germans to forego any real increase in their incomes for the next five years to finance the necessary transfers in spending to the east.

He spoke in Schwerin, capital of the eastern state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, at unification celebrations marred by a rash of demonstrations by both left-wing and right-wing extremists.

This coincided with scenes broadcast on television of Chancellor Helmut Kohl being jeered by hostile crowds at the same event.

The president's speech amounted to both the most devastating and possibly the most inspiring assessment of the challenges facing the united Germany to be delivered since unification.

He said the level of unem-

ployment in the east could not be allowed to drag on for five years or more. At the same time west Germans could not expect any real increase in their incomes, above the rate of inflation, for at least five years; nor was there any realistic prospect of living standards equalising in that time.

As for the rash of violence against foreigners, he said: "The touchstone of our democratic order is our behaviour towards the influx from abroad. We cannot hope to dry up that flow. We can only attempt to channel it and, step by step, to reduce it."

Yesterday Mr Rudolf Seiters, the interior minister, promised new measures against right-wing extremists, including preventive detention and wider powers of police arrest.

The extremists also prompted Mr Kohl to use his strongest words to date on the issue. At a rally at Sachsenhausen, the former Nazi concentration camp where a Jewish museum was destroyed in an arson attack last week, he said: "There must be no tolerance of intolerance. The law-based state must not be prevented, by some ill-understood idea of liberalism, from showing its teeth to terrorists, whichever side they are on."

## Craxi's son bows out of politics

By Halig Simonian in Milan

MR Vittorio "Bobo" Craxi, son of Italy's Socialist party leader, Mr Bettino Craxi, is withdrawing from politics after allegations and setbacks in the wake of the Milan political corruption scandal.

The younger Mr Craxi, a leading member of the Socialist party organisation in Italy's second city, seemed set until recently to follow in his father's footsteps, possibly to the top of the party developed by his father into a linchpin of recent government.

The Socialists, and the Craxi in particular, have been tainted by the growing revelations of political corruption in big Italian cities.

Though no charges have been brought against Mr "Bobo" Craxi, he has complained of being regularly insulted by strangers and of being taken for guilty when actually innocent.

Meanwhile, the Christian Democrats, Italy's biggest political party, named Mr Mino Martinazzoli as their next leader to replace Mr Arnaldo Forlani.

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Similarly, for the 30km tunnel through the Löttschberg, the Swiss engineering group Emch & Berger seems well placed, having already done pre-design work for Bern-Löttschberg-Simplon Bahn, the manager of that line.

Swiss analysts assume a consortium led by Elektrowatt, the Swiss energy and engineering company, will win most of this work; the group designed the Gotthard road tunnel built in the late 1970s. But Elektrowatt itself has, even though it has already participated in pre-design work, less confidence.

"It is completely open. We will compete hard, but there will be surprises," predicts Mr Max Bruggmann, director of Elektrowatt Engineering.

At the beginning of 1996, in the meantime there are some large planning and design contracts to be let within the next few months by the Swiss Federal Railways, the Gotthard project manager.

The Swiss expect that some big European groups, such as Philipp Holzmann of Germany and Cogefar and Lodigiani of Italy, will bid.

France's Lafarge Copepe, with its control of Cementia, is expected to compete strongly with the Swiss Holderbank to

supply construction materials, but the highly specialised Swiss Sika Finanz group should win the contracts for tunnel joints.

## El Al aircraft crashes in Amsterdam

By Ronald van de Krol in Amsterdam and Hugh Carnegie in Jerusalem

AT LEAST 12 people died last night after an El Al cargo aircraft crashed into two nine-storey blocks of flats on the outskirts of Amsterdam.

The crash started fires which were still blazing two and a half hours after the crash and in which dozens more were feared dead. All four aboard the aircraft - three crew and one passenger - were believed killed.

Although airline officials

were careful not to commit themselves, early indications suggested mechanical failure led to the accident.

A spokesman for the Dutch civil aviation authority said the Israeli airline's Boeing 747 appeared to have exploded on impact with the building and there was no evidence so far that the aircraft had blown up in the air.

However, some eyewitnesses quoted by Dutch television reported seeing an explosion before the crash.

The aircraft, which was en route from New York to Tel

Aviv, had just completed a stopover at Amsterdam's Schiphol airport. The crew had reported flames shooting out from two of its motors about 10 minutes after take-off and the aircraft was attempting to return to the airport when it went down, hitting the two adjoining blocks, containing 480 flats.

The flats, located in the outlying Amsterdam neighbourhood of Bijlmermeer, were constructed in the 1960s. Firemen were struggling to contain the fire so that a search of the 50 gutted apartments could begin.

Eyewitnesses said the air-

craft appeared to have dumped fuel just before it went down on its way back to Schiphol. The civil aviation authority said it received a May Day signal just before the crash.

An investigation into the incident, believed to be the worst civil aviation disaster in the Netherlands, was immediately launched. In Israel, Mr Rafi Har Lev, chief executive of El Al, said a team of Israeli investigators would leave immediately for Amsterdam to take part in the inquiry.

Since the surge of hijackings

by Arab and other international terrorist groups in the 1970s, El Al has imposed probably the toughest security measures of any airline in the world. It has suffered two mid-air hijackings and several attacks on its aircraft and passengers on the ground in Israel and elsewhere. But the airline has never lost an aircraft, cargo or passenger to sabotage in mid-air.

On cargo flights, which carry many of Israel's top exports, freight is subject to strict controls which can result in slower turnaround times than on rival airlines.



Across the divide: Mrs Barbara Bush, wife of US President George Bush, greets Governor Bill Clinton, the Democratic party's presidential candidate, at a dinner hosted by the National Italian-American Foundation in Washington

## Regulation turned into a populist cause

## Bill on cable television to test Bush's veto powers

By George Graham in Washington

PRESIDENT George Bush's veto power will today face its toughest test when the Senate votes on a motion to override his refusal to sign legislation regulating the cable television industry.

On all 35 previous Bush vetoes, including votes last week on trade with China and abortion counselling, Congress has failed to muster the two-thirds majority needed to overturn them.

The cable bill, however, won

majorities well above the two-thirds mark on its first passage in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. Mr Bush needs to persuade at least nine Republican senators to reverse their earlier votes if he is to prevail.

Cable regulation has turned into a populist cause. Television broadcasters and consumer interest groups have lobbied massively to fan the flames of public hostility to the cable companies, which in many cities have used their monopoly positions to raise fees by three times the rate of party loyalty.

Perhaps assisting him in this effort is the active role of Senator Al Gore, the Democrats' vice-presidential candidate, in pushing for the cable bill. Mr Gore's vote for the bill on September 22 was only the third he has cast in the Senate since Governor Bill Clinton picked him to be his running mate in July.

Mr Bush's use of the cable message that it would cost in higher, not lower cable costs.

Differences of opinion on the bill do not always run along party lines, although most supporters of the regulation effort are Democrats, and

## Free trade treaty wins Clinton's guarded support

By Nancy Dunn in Washington

GOVERNOR Bill Clinton, the Democratic presidential candidate, yesterday endorsed the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) but said it must be toughened up in US legislation, which is needed to implement the pact.

After several days of debate within his campaign, the governor took a middle course. Instead of urging renegotiation over workers' rights and environmental provisions, as his labour allies have urged, Mr Clinton said he believed his bill could be strengthened unilaterally.

He said the treaty should not be seen as a solution to America's economic problems or a threat to its future. It could mean more jobs for American workers and better environmental protection.

"I am convinced I can do it right," he said. "I am deeply convinced that [President George] Bush won't."

His decision not to seek renegotiation will limit the scope of changes to provisions like job retraining. Mr Bush has offered a \$2bn-a-year (\$1.1bn) retraining scheme but has not identified the means to fund it. However, the president made a point of accusing his opponent of "waffling" even before the agreement's text was publicly available.

Clinton advisers are understood to have felt it was important to get the Nafta issue out of the way before Wednesday, when Mr Bush is due to sign the pact in San Antonio, Texas. Above all, Mr Clinton's position had to be clear before the three 90-minute debates he is to hold with Mr Bush and Mr Ross Perot on October 11, 15 and 19.

## Brazil prison riot leaves 111 dead

By Christophe Lamb in Rio de Janeiro

IN the worst prison violence in Brazilian history at least 111 inmates were killed and 35 injured as police quelled an uprising inside the country's largest prison.

The rebellion at the overcrowded Casa de Detenção in São Paulo was apparently provoked by a clash between rival gangs. Inmates of São Paulo 9, which houses the most dangerous criminals, began attacking each other on Friday evening with clubs, knives and guns.

They later barricaded themselves in with furniture and set fire to the block.

As fighting spread prison officers called in the military police. After negotiations failed 300 soldiers stormed the jail and finally retaken it after four hours of fighting. Most of the deaths resulted from gunshot wounds, according to officials who released the death toll on Saturday evening. No police officer was killed.

Mr Luiz Antonio Fleury, governor of São Paulo, ordered an inquiry into the police action. Mr Mauricio Correa, the new

justice minister, said the jail system was in a state of collapse - yet another victim of lack of resources".

• The political parties which led the successful campaign to impeach ex-President Fernando Collor appear headed for victory in Brazil's municipal elections. Preliminary results for Saturday's first-round elections in more than 5,000 municipalities showed a significant shift to the left and a clear rejection of pro-Collar candidates of the Liberal Front (PFL) and National Reconstruction (PRN) parties.

## Bank of England is 'not telling full BCCI story'

US SENATOR John Kerry, who is investigating the failed Bank of Credit and Commerce International, stepped up his attacks on the Bank of England yesterday with the claim that it "is not telling the full story" about the bank's collapse, writes David Lascelles.

Last week the Bank denied a charge in Mr Kerry's report that it had colluded in a cover-up of BCCI's fraud with the claim that he had not taken evidence directly from

the Bank or its officials.

Mr Kerry said on the BBC yesterday he had approached the Federal Reserve Board for documents which it had from the Bank of England. The Federal Reserve informed us that under no conditions did the Bank of England want us or anyone else to have access to those documents."

Mr Kerry stood by his assertion that the Bank knew of BCCI's frauds in April 1990, more than a year before it was shut down.



tive and rolling stock orders, although foreign suppliers, including Siemens, figure strongly in signalling equipment.

Nevertheless, in a project of this size there should be considerable smaller sub-contracts for specialist manufacturers in other European countries. Mr Michael Berger, of the Austrian Trade Commission in Zurich, says his office is planning a symposium on the project for Austrian companies next spring.

Mr Serge Ledermann, of Geneva bankers Lombard Odier, says one consequence of making the tendering international is that the fat margins Swiss contractors normally get on their business will be squeezed. And the fact that the work will be spread over 15 years means the impact on profits of any particular company is not likely to be great.

## International groups wary of Swiss tunnel project

### Domestic companies' apparent advantages are deterring foreign tenders, writes Ian Rodger

way, as the Swiss have long experience of tunnelling and much specialised equipment and personnel in place.

Also, as Crédit Suisse hinted in a recent study, governments can usually find ways to make sure domestic companies do well on big public projects, even when international tenders are used. "The application of Swiss laws on wages, welfare payments and health and safety at work should prevent a major share of the pie from disappearing down the throats of foreign companies," the study says.

According to the government's schedule, boring of the first 50km tunnel through the Gotthard should get under way

at the beginning of 1996. In the meantime there are some large planning and design contracts to be let within the next few months by the Swiss Federal Railways, the Gotthard project manager.

'Armed clash' if weapons seized from Russia

## Moscow warns Georgia over arms

By John Lloyd in Moscow

**THE RUSSIAN** defence minister, General Pavel Grachev, has warned the government of Georgia not to fulfil its stated intention to take over all weapons and military equipment of the Russian (formerly Soviet) forces on its territory, or risk "an armed clash with Russian forces".

This follows a warning on Saturday from Russian President Boris Yeltsin to "take corresponding measures to protect the interests of Russian citizens" caught up in the growing conflict in Georgia.

Mr Edward Shavardnadze, the Georgian leader, had ordered the seizure of Russian arms at the weekend after touring the sites of fighting in the northern Georgian autonomous republic of Abkhazia, where local forces took the town of Gagra last week after heavy fighting last week. Mr Shavardnadze said he would raise an army of 40,000 reservists against the Abkhazian rebels, who engaged the Georgian forces sent to the republic after

it declared independence in August.

The conflict is spreading throughout the Caucasus, as the Confederation of Mountain Peoples also vowed to raise a 40,000-strong force to assist Abkhazia in its struggle. The confederation draws its support from the largely Moslem Caucasian autonomous republics on Russia's southern border with Georgia.

Russian troops are also being drawn into the ever-fiercer civil war in the Central Asian state of Tajikistan, where supporters of ousted President Rahmon Nabiyev have concentrated in the south of a republic and are battling with supporters of the new, pro-Islamic government of the republic in the regional capital of Kurgan-Tyube.

Reports from the area yesterday pointed to continuing fierce fighting, with refugees streaming out of Kurgan-Tyube towards the Tajik capital of Dushanbe. The Russian detachments in the republic were strengthened last week, and are accused by the anti-Nabi-



A woman, with a Jordanian UN soldier, revisits her shattered home in Serb-occupied Croatia, a year after war forced her out.

## Gorbachev cancels trip after court ban

By John Lloyd

**MR MIKHAIL GORBACHEV**, the former Soviet president and Communist party leader, has cancelled a scheduled trip to South Korea after the Constitutional Court banned him from leaving Russia.

Mr Gorbachev faces legal action, including possible imprisonment, if he continues to refuse to testify before the court, which is determining whether or not the party he led was "constitutional". Mr Gorbachev said on Saturday that he had become the first Russian political "refusenik", claiming that the court's demand for him to testify was itself anti-

constitutional.

"From a political standpoint," Mr Gorbachev said, "such an action is administrative lawlessness, fraught with the revival of the practice of deprivation of rights for political motives [a reference to the Stalin era]."

The court has heard testimony from a number of former top Communists, including Mr Nikolai Ryzhkov, prime minister during most of Mr Gorbachev's leadership, and Mr Arkady Vol'sky, a former senior aide to several party leaders and one of the few such officials to have kept his job as head of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs.

## Moves to scrap Soviet debt plan

By Chrystie Freeland in Kiev

**UKRAINE** and Russia announced plans at the weekend to scrap the system of collective responsibility for the foreign debt of the former Soviet Union. But the two Slavic heavyweights advanced conflicting proposals for a new system.

At a meeting in Kiev, Mr Leonid Kravchuk, the Ukrainian president, and Mr Yegor Gaidar, Russia's acting prime minister, agreed that the system, which the former Soviet republic established under intense pressure from western creditors, was flawed.

Under the fierce scrutiny of the Group of Seven (G7) industrialised countries, eight of the former Soviet republics, including Russia and Ukraine, assumed at the end of last year "joint and several" responsibility for the former Soviet Union's \$26bn (245bn) foreign debt. Western creditors, fearing some of the poorer republics might default, pushed for collective assumption of the debt over the objections of independent-minded republics like Ukraine.

The agreement on collective responsibility for the debt could be severely strained by

the joint attack from Ukraine and Russia, which have together pledged to pay back 77.47 per cent of the total.

"We have agreed that the old system of joint and several responsibility for the foreign debt of the former Soviet Union is going nowhere and does not work," Mr Gaidar said.

However, Ukraine and Russia differed on alternatives. Ukrainian negotiators said that Russia proposed a "zero option" to Ukraine. The idea was that Russia should assume sole responsibility for the debt with regard to western creditors and, in exchange, be granted exclusive control over the former Soviet Union's foreign assets.

According to this proposal, Ukraine's share of 16.37 per cent of the debt would become Ukrainian debt to Russia. As Kiev paid off the money to Moscow, it would receive a corresponding share of the assets.

Ukrainian officials objected on the grounds that it would give *de jure* status to Russia's *de facto* control over the former Soviet Union's foreign assets. Obtaining a share of these assets has been a central plank of Ukrainian foreign policy for the past year.

## Havel insists on a Czech state

By Ariane Genillard in Prague

**THE FORMER** Czechoslovak president, Mr Václav Havel, urged at the weekend that preparations towards an independent Czech state be speeded up, following a Slovak about-face which dashed plans to dissolve the federal state by the end of the year.

Mr Havel was reacting to the initiative of Mr Vladimír Mečiar, the Slovak prime minister, who with the Czech opposition parties succeeded on Thursday in having the federal parliament adopt a motion to draw up plans for a new union between the Czech and Slovak republics.

This union would link the two republics under a single president heading a government in charge of economic, defence, foreign, social and environmental policies.

The move contradicts all post-electoral agreements

between Mr Mečiar and Mr Václav Klaus, the Czech prime minister, which aimed to dissolve the federal state legally by January 1.

"I fear this will lead to prolonged uncertainty," Mr Havel said. "The Czech parliament should declare its intention to create an independent Czech state and adopt as soon as possible its own constitution."

Calls for a unilateral secession of the Czech republic from the federal state increased at the weekend among Czech officials angered by the Slovak U-turn. However, such a move could only legally be achieved via a popular referendum.

Recent opinion polls show that fewer than half of all Czechs would vote to break up the federal state.

Mr Klaus, who had pushed for a break-up since Slovaks won power in last June's election, is due to meet Mr Mečiar tomorrow.

## Bad weather interrupts resumed Sarajevo airlift

## Bosnian refugees to be offered shelter in west

By Laura Silber in Karlovac

**THE FIRST** group of Moslems released from Serb-held detention camps in Bosnia-Herzegovina will be offered sanctuary in the west, mostly in Scandinavia, the United Nations said in the Croatian capital Zagreb yesterday.

In Sarajevo, the resumed aid flight to the besieged city was interrupted by bad weather. Four US and Canadian aircraft carrying food and radar equipment needed to keep the airport functioning during winter landed yesterday in the city before poor weather forced the suspension of the operation.

Five other scheduled flights were cancelled.

Mr Peter Kessler, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Zagreb, said western countries had pledged to provide sanctuary for most of the 1,600 mainly Moslem men released on Thursday from the Trnopolje camp in northern Bosnia.

These, the most recent arrivals in neighbouring Croatia, which has some 700,000 refugees already, have been given shelter in abandoned army barracks in Karlovac, southwest of Zagreb.

Serb forces control about two-thirds of Bosnia's territory.

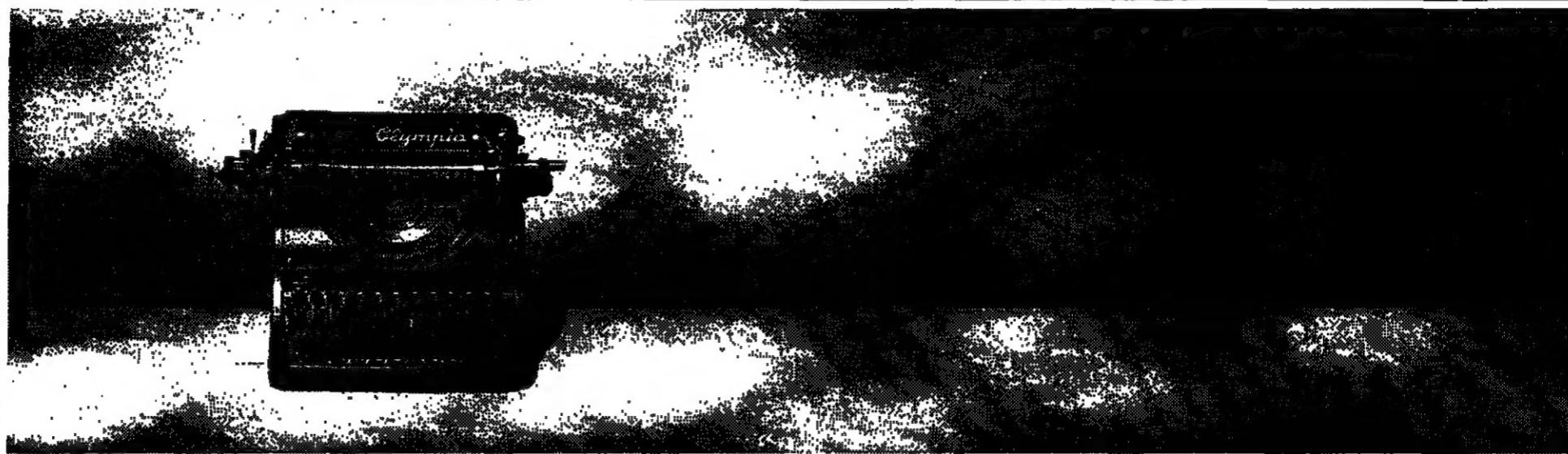
Croatian authorities have allowed the released detainees to remain in Karlovac for two weeks.

Relief organisations at the run-down barracks worry however about visits by Croatian and Bosnian army officers who, despite a ban, are trying to recruit fighters.

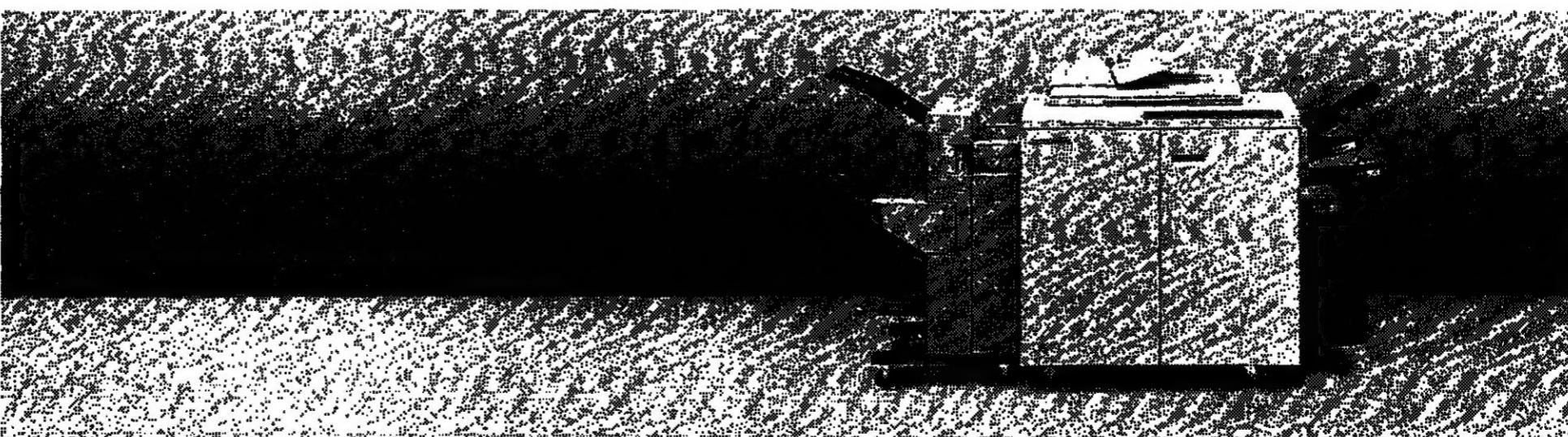
Meanwhile, stories of cruelty by Serb forces against Moslems in Bosnia continued to emerge.

One man, allowed to speak by international relief organisations on condition his identity was not revealed, yesterday corroborated earlier reports of how Serb forces in August shot some 200 Moslem detainees in a ravine outside Travnik in southern Bosnia. He explained how he had survived by lying for several hours under a dead body.

Other men considered themselves fortunate. Serb forces had released their wives and children in July. Some were in Zagreb. But no one believed Moslems would ever again be able to live with Serbs. They told how neighbours had turned against neighbours.



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## NEWS: INTERNATIONAL

# Police seek to bottle up Osaka riots

By Robert Thomson in Osaka

HUNDREDS of riot police patrolled slum streets in Osaka last night after four days of violent clashes with destitute labourers left several dozen people injured and the area strewn with debris and gutted vehicles.

Twelve arrests were made as many of the Airon area's 30,000 day-labourers protested against the suspension of welfare payments by the local government. But the real cause is Japan's economic downturn, which has hit labourers harder than mainstream workers.

At around 5am each morning, the day-labour market opens in a dirty concrete building which has been at the centre of the protests. Job touts with presumed gang links hold up notices offering two or three days' work clearing a building site or filling a job-

spot in a small factory.

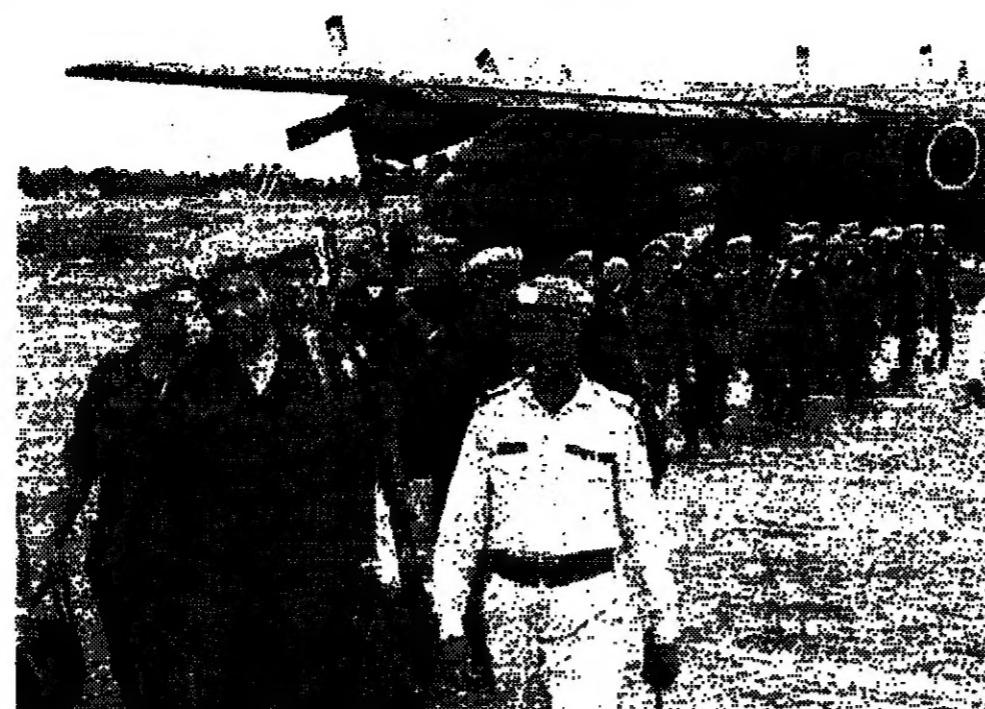
The crash of Osaka's property market and the slowing of factory orders have left many of the men reliant on hand-outs. A special fund was exhausted last week, inspiring the protests by the destitute, whose desperation is heightened by drink dependence or debts to gang-run loan shops.

Last night, hundreds of the workers were sleeping outside the job market, where they were hoping to get work in the day's muster.

Placards around the building demanded government help. Small groups of workers huddled together, discussing tactics, as hundreds of riot police with batons at the ready massed in a nearby police station.

The clashes are the most serious since a week of rioting in the same district two years ago left 200 injured.

Police fear the riots will be a



JAPAN'S troop deployment in Cambodia speeded up at the weekend with 160 more soldiers joining the peace mission. This is the first overseas task for Japanese ground forces since Japan's surrender in 1945 and follows the signing into law of its peace-keeping operations bill in June after 20 months' bitter debate. The engineer units and eight military observers join 15,000 soldiers from 30 countries wearing UN blue berets in Cambodia. They will monitor a ceasefire, disarm rival armies and supervise elections next May. The main body of Japanese troops arrives on October 13.

feature of the economic downturn, as the labourers' desperation becomes more acute, and

that the troubles may be a beacon for extremist groups. One factor fueling the protests is

outrage at a police confession that a local officer had taken bribes from gangsters.

# Pressure on LDP over cash for faction chief

By Charles Leadbeater in Tokyo

JAPAN'S political leadership is under increasing pressure to respond to public criticism of Mr Shin Kanemaru, the Liberal Democratic party's most powerful faction chief, who last week was fined ¥200,000 (2934) for receiving illegal political donations of ¥500m (£3.3m).

Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, who has depended heavily on Mr Kanemaru's behind-the-scenes support, said he deeply regretted his colleague had breached the political control funds law. Mr Kanemaru was fined after he admitted receiving money from a scandal-ridden courier com-

pany. Mr Miyazawa's first comments, at a weekend seminar of LDP members, were widely seen as an attempt to respond to party criticism. Mr Miyazawa said he would devote himself to making detailed political reform proposals to the Diet in November.

The LDP leadership has come under pressure for further action and the controversy could trigger a destabilising power struggle within the LDP over the successor to Mr Kanemaru as head of the Takashita faction, the largest

The opposition parties have unanimously called for Mr Kanemaru to testify to the Diet over the case and some have

called for his resignation. Also, more than 50 prefectural and city assemblies have passed resolutions criticising Mr Kanemaru or the Tokyo prosecutors for failing to pursue the case to court.

It is thought Mr Kanemaru made a written confession to avoid a trial which could have further damaged his standing and risked the exposure of allegations that he had links with Japan's leading crime syndicate. Mr Miyazawa's handling of the issue has been perceived as weak, reflecting his dependence on Mr Kanemaru.

This was underlined by an expression of thanks to Mr Kanemaru for his promotion of party unity.

# Knighthood for Sony chairman

BRITAIN is to bestow an honorary knighthood on Mr Akio Morita, chairman of Sony Corp and champion of deeper

Anglo-Japanese ties, the UK embassy in Tokyo said yesterday. Reuter reports. Mr Morita

is 71, who conceived the Sony Walkman, is to be made an Honorary Knight Commander of the British Empire (KBE). He was involved in Sony's decision to set up a TV factory in Bridgend, Wales, in

1973, the first big manufacturing investment by a Japanese group in Britain. Last year Sony chose Pencoed in mid-Glamorgan to build a factory making colour TV sets and computer display monitors.

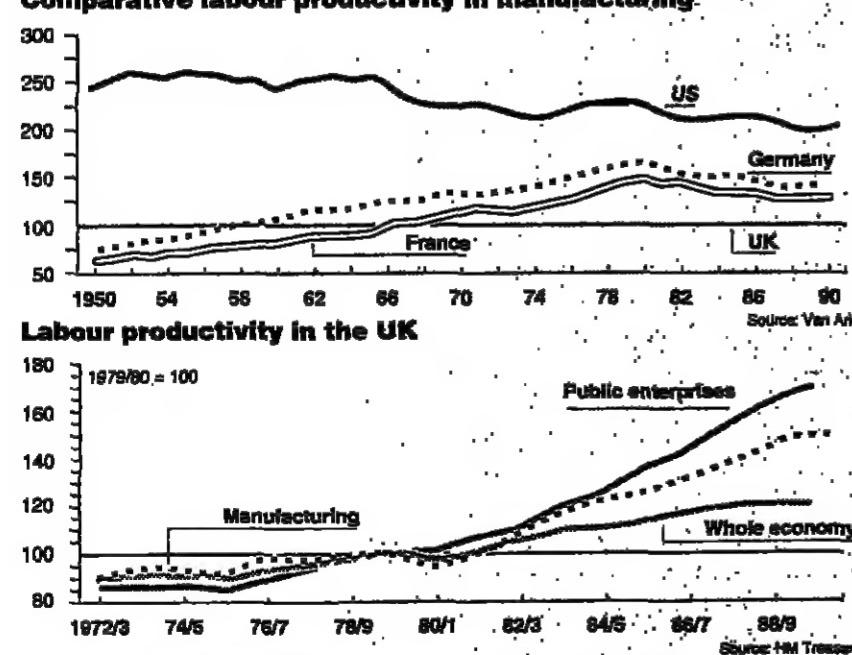
## INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC INDICATORS: PRODUCTION AND EMPLOYMENT

Yearly data for retail sales volume and industrial production plus all data for the vacancy rate indicator are in index form with 1985 = 100. Quarterly and monthly data for retail sales and industrial production show the percentage change over the corresponding period in the previous year, and are positive unless otherwise stated. The unemployment rate is shown as a percentage of the total labour force. Figures for the composite leading indicator are end-period values.

UNITED STATES		JAPAN		GERMANY		FRANCE		ITALY		UNITED KINGDOM			
Retail sales volume	Industrial production	Vacancy rate	Composite leading indicator	Retail sales volume	Industrial production	Unemployment rate	Vacancy rate	Composite leading indicator	Retail sales volume	Industrial production	Unemployment rate	Vacancy rate	Composite leading indicator
1985	100.0	100.0	7.1	100.0	102.9	100.0	100.0	98.6	100.0	100.0	102.2	100.0	102.1
1986	105.7	101.0	6.9	98.0	108.2	106.5	99.7	98.4	104.3	102.4	101.1	104.4	105.2
1987	108.3	105.9	6.1	105.5	110.0	113.8	103.1	108.3	107.4	102.5	6.2	104.6	109.5
1988	112.3	111.6	5.4	101.1	114.3	122.8	112.9	122.9	106.2	8.2	164.7	111.8	109.5
1989	115.1	114.5	5.2	98.3	113.1	132.8	118.9	122.5	114.1	5.8	210.9	111.3	113.4
1990	116.4	115.5	5.0	98.5	111.1	140.4	122.3	124.5	112.1	4.9	201.5	111.1	113.4
1991	112.5	113.5	5.6	91.9	111.1	145.0	123.7	124.4	112.0	4.3	270.9	112.0	108.7
3rd qtr. 1991	-1.5	-2.1	6.7	60.9	112.5	1.0	1.2	2.1	141.6	124.6	0.2	1.9	278.6
4th qtr. 1991	-1.5	-1.1	6.2	59.1	114.7	-1.6	-1.8	2.1	140.3	123.4	1.1	0.1	280.0
1st qtr. 1992	3.3	1.3	7.1	55.8	110.5	-4.6	-2.0	2.1	122.2	122.2	-2.3	1.3	278.2
2nd qtr. 1992	1.7	2.0	7.4	80.4	116.0	-0.8	-2.1	2.1	125.0	123.0	-4.5	-1.3	275.2
September 1991	-1.3	-2.0	6.7	69.9	112.5	-1.2	1.3	2.1	137.3	124.6	-0.2	0.7	272.5
October 1991	-0.8	-1.4	6.2	63.2	112.5	-1.6	-1.8	2.1	140.3	123.4	0.3	1.1	280.0
November	-0.2	0.8	6.8	59.1	113.7	-1.1	-1.2	2.1	138.0	124.0	-0.4	1.7	282.4
December	0.5	0.2	7.0	59.8	114.7	0.0	-1.8	2.1	138.3	123.4	0.6	-2.1	286.5
January 1992	5.0	0.0	7.0	56.3	115.8	-0.2	-3.6	2.1	136.1	123.4	-1.3	0.2	272.8
February	3.9	1.4	7.2	59.0	116.6	-2.4	-4.6	2.1	132.5	123.3	-2.1	3.4	282.8
March	1.2	2.5	7.2	61.4	118.8	-4.5	-5.6	2.0	130.2	123.2	-4.9	0.2	281.7
April	2.0	2.3	7.1	59.3	116.8	-2.8	-6.0	2.0	129.8	123.0	-2.3	-0.2	279.3
May	1.7	2.0	7.1	61.2	116.2	-1.0	-8.9	2.1	121.2	122.8	-4.2	0.3	270.2
June	1.4	1.1	7.7	60.7	116.0	-3.6	-2.1	2.1	123.0	123.0	-6.9	-2.9	271.1
July	1.6	1.0	7.8	59.5	116.0	-8.1	-2.1	2.1	120.9	123.0	-4.3	-2.6	267.1
August	0.8	7.5	61.2	-	-	-7.8	-	0.5	284.6	-	-3.7	-	284.6

All series seasonally adjusted. Statistics for Germany apply only to western Germany. Data supplied by Datastream and WFEA. Retail sales volumes: data from national government sources except Japan and Italy (value series deflated by OECD using CPI). Refers to total retail sales except France and Italy (major outlets only) and Japan (department stores only). Industrial production: data from national government sources. Includes mining, manufacturing, construction, electricity, gas and water supply industries except Japan (mining and manufacturing only) and UK (also includes construction firms). Unemployment rates: OECD standardized rates which adjust as far as possible for the effects of seasonal variations. Vacancies: data from national government sources in index form. Data from OECD series. US - help-wanted advertising; Japan - new vacancies; Germany and France - all jobs vacant; Italy - no data available; UK - unfilled vacancies. Composite leading indicator: OECD data. Each is a combination of series, cyclical fluctuations in general economic activity.

## Comparative labour productivity in manufacturing



## What is left of the British 'economic miracle'?

IN the midst of the current recession, all that talk of four years ago about a "British economic miracle" seems a delusion, one triggered by a powerful economic drug, easy credit. But a recent survey, published by the Treasury, suggests that neither the euphoria of a few years ago nor the despair of today is entirely justified.\* The UK did see creditable achievements, but ones that were in part thrown away.

The years 1979 and 1980 were

achieved a mere 1.1 per cent a year, but behind Japan's 2.9 per cent. Again, what was remarkable was the deterioration of others. Japan's annual rate of productivity growth had been 8.1 per cent between 1980 and 1983 and Italy's 5.8 per cent.

Not to fall further behind was an achievement of a kind, but no cause for ecstasy, but in manufacturing, where labour productivity was (and is) still further behind levels achieved in more successful economies than elsewhere in the British economy, the UK started to catch up, as shown in the top chart.

Labour productivity in manufacturing grew 4.8 per cent a year between 1979 and 1989. This was not only vastly better than the 1.1 per cent registered between 1973 and 1978, but also better than the 3.4 per cent of 1980-73. UK performance was

behind that of Japan, which managed 5.4 per cent, but well above Germany's 1.8 per cent (no *Wirtschaftswunder* here), France's 3.2 per cent and Italy's 4 per cent.

What caused the improvement? Not

investment, it appears, nor closure of inefficient capacity. What mattered most was greater flexibility and efficiency in companies. Just how much that can mean is shown in the second chart. Notice in particular how the overmanned and slow-moving public enterprise behemoths, most now privatised, increased labour productivity by 70 per cent between 1979-80 and 1988-89.

UK manufacturing did become fitter, but output rose by only 12.3 per cent, from 1979 to 1989. Yet one would expect a sector enjoying a global market and achieving a high rate of growth of productivity to grow quickly, absorbing a high proportion of investment in the process. UK manufacturing did not. From 27 per cent of business investment in 1979, its share declined to 19 per cent in 1989.

Presumably, manufacturing did not grow more because it was not profitable enough. Profitability was ground between 1979 and 1989, and the upper milestone of international competition. Lower growth in the real cost of labour would

have raised the return on capital and stimulated more - and more - labour-absorbing investment, both

Just in time

## NEWS: INTERNATIONAL

# US tries to calm Angola after poll

By Mark Nicholson  
in Kuwait City

**T**HE US, South Africa and other western observers to Angola's peace process were trying to defuse tension in the rebel Unita movement yesterday as it became clear that President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and the ruling MPLA party had won the war-tattered country's first democratic elections.

A diplomatic offensive was under way to keep Unita locked into the process, following an inflammatory weekend broadcast by Mr Jonas Savimbi, the Unita leader, which

**J**ulian Ozanne on attempts to keep Unita in the peace process

claimed the elections had been rigged, dismissed the verdict of the international community and made a veiled threat of a return to violence.

Mr Herman Cohen, US assistant secretary for African affairs and South African President F.W. de Clerk both sent messages to Unita, once backed by Washington and Pretoria, urging restraint and respect for established procedures for resolving disputes.

"Savimbi is having trouble facing up to the reality that Unita has been a victim of its own propaganda for the past 17 years and it does not have the support in the country. It thought it had," said senior western "diplomat" yesterday. "It's a very painful process for Savimbi personally, and he is obviously confused, emotional and frustrated. But we are telling him in no uncertain terms that he must stay with the process."

Official results from 70 per cent of the country's 5,616 polling stations showed yesterday that President dos Santos was leading Mr Savimbi in the presidential race by 53.6 to 37 per cent.

Dependence on the power

# Kuwaiti premier to open files on invasion



Election candidate Khalid al-Adwawi addresses a crowd of 2,000 in Kuwait City

KUWAIT'S most actively fought election campaign closed this weekend with Sheikh Saad al-Sabah, the crown prince and prime minister, promising to "open the files" on the government's conduct leading up to the Iraqi invasion in August 1990 while lending his support for extending the vote to women.

Sheikh Saad's attempt to address some demands by Kuwait's opposition groups came in a television and radio broadcast on Saturday night in which he also denied claims that the government was seeking to weaken the country's constitution.

His remarks were the first public response to government critics from any member of the ruling al-Sabah family in the campaign. Kuwait's 81,400 eligible voters go to the polls this morning to elect a 50-seat National Assembly, the first full parliament since the emir suspended the last in 1986.

The assembly has limited powers to initiate and veto legislation and can summon, and in some cases sack, ministers.

Responding to repeated calls at rallies throughout the campaign, Sheikh Saad said: "We

will not stand against going into the file of August 2 1990, in the light of persistent demands to open this file."

Opposition groups, and many independent candidates, have argued that the government should be called to account for

what they regard as government complacency before the Iraqi invasion and for the apparent unpreparedness of the Kuwaiti armed forces.

Sheikh Saad also said he favoured extending the vote to Kuwait's women, 52 per cent of

the population, who have led an unprecedented campaign to win the franchise. But he said that this and other opposition demands to lower the voting age to 18 and enfranchise naturalised Kuwaitis should be left to the next parliament.

IRAQ yesterday dismissed as illegal a UN Security Council resolution to seize frozen Iraqi oil assets and said it was determined to press on with negotiations over a partial resumption of Iraqi oil exports, Reuter reports from Baghdad.

Finance Minister Ahmed Hussein al-Samarai said Iraq would pursue its plan to seek UN permission to export oil worth \$4bn over six months. This could be extended for six months more to help provide food, medicine and humanitarian needs for Iraqis, he said.

The Iraqi news agency INA quoted him as saying that UN acceptance of the plan would "help provide the source of living for the Iraqi people from the north to the south".

## Troops move on Zaire bank

Troops with tanks have surrounded the Zaire central bank in a new power tussle with the prime minister, Reuter reports from Kinshasa. The move by soldiers under President Mobutu Sese Seko's command followed the sacking of central bank governor Nyemba Shabani by Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, who is at odds with the president.

## Mauritania devalues

Mauritania yesterday said it had devalued its national currency the ouguiya, by more than 20 per cent, from \$2.65 to 106 against the dollar, Reuter reports from Nouakchott.

## Fighting in Afghan city

Heavy fighting raged yesterday in the western Afghan city of Herat between a fundamentalist group and the government-appointed commander, Reuter reports from Islamabad.

## Washington renews arms pledge to Israel

By Hugh Carnegy in Jerusalem

THE US has given a written commitment to maintain present levels of military aid to Israel, in a move interpreted by the Israeli government as evidence that Washington will continue to bolster the Jewish state's regional qualitative military advantage.

The assurance, in a letter to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin from acting secretary of state Lawrence Eagleburger, followed last month's military assistance for Israel to help offset its objections to the proposed US sale of up to 72 F-15 fighter aircraft to Saudi Arabia.

The package, including the supply of Apache and Blackhawk helicopters and "prepositioning" of US military equipment in Israel, was in addition to the \$1.5bn Israel receives in annual military aid from the US. It is the latter that Mr Eagleburger promised to maintain. It amounts to almost half of all US annual foreign military aid.

Israeli officials are extremely pleased with these developments. They said they believed the commitments would be honoured regardless of who won the US presidential election next month.

Recent disputes over alleged transfers by Israel of US technology to South Africa and China and budgetary pressures in Washington had led to Israeli fears that aid might be reduced. Last month's additional aid package specified a commitment to allow Israel access to advanced technology.

● Syria has reiterated its rejection of a summit meeting between President Hafez al-Assad and Mr Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin proposed by Israel to advance peace talks between the two countries. The prospect receded during a weekend visit to Damascus, Cairo and Jerusalem by Mr Roland Dumas, the French foreign minister, when Syria said a summit would undermine present negotiations due to resume in Washington later this month.

Counting was still continuing last night, but it appeared that Labor would win less than a quarter of Victoria's 88 state parliament seats. The defeat will be a severe blow to Mr Keating's federal government, which needs to retain several marginal seats in Victoria to win the next national election, due by next June.

Labor's federal prospects have also been weakened by a defeat in Tasmania earlier this year, and by its failure to dislodge a minority conservative gov-

## State election blow to Australian Labor party

By Kevin Brown in Sydney

THE re-election prospects of Australia's federal Labor government dimmed yesterday after the opposition conservative parties scored a landslide victory in state elections in Victoria.

The Liberal/National party coalition achieved a bigger than expected swing to eject Labor from government. Australia's second most populous state for the first time in 10 years.

Counting was still continuing last night, but it appeared that Labor would win less than a quarter of Victoria's 88 state parliament seats. The defeat will be a severe blow to Mr Keating's federal government, which needs to retain several marginal seats in Victoria to win the next national election, due by next June.

Mr Keating's main hope of rebuilding support in Victoria lies in a confrontation between the conservatives and the trade union movement, which has threatened to oppose proposals for industrial relations reform. Any signs of industrial unrest in Victoria are likely to be portrayed by Labor as a forecast of what would happen under a conservative government in Canberra.

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NORTHWEST AIRLINES

Some People Just Know How To Fly

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## NEWS: UK

# Ministers try to dispel tax increase fear

By Alison Smith

SENIOR ministers sought yesterday to dispel the shadow of tax increases as a way through current economic difficulties following Britain's withdrawal from the European exchange rate mechanism (ERM).

They emphasised that, outside control of the ERM, public spending was even more important than before in ensuring that the government's anti-inflationary strategy carried credibility.

Mr Kenneth Clarke, home secretary, said the government would not leave sterling in free fall, and stressed the need to bring stability back to the pound's exchange rates as soon as possible.

Mr Clarke signalled that Mr Norman Lamont, chancellor of the exchequer, would be prepared to raise interest rates if the pound continued its fall.

He was joined in his efforts to calm nervousness in the money markets about the direction of economic policy by Mr Michael Heseltine, trade and industry secretary, who said raising taxes was the "least attractive course" open

to the government.

Earlier Mr John Major admitted in an interview with the Sunday Express newspaper that since sterling had been suspended from the ERM the government had "a less satisfactory counter-inflation policy than we used to have".

The dispute centres on a book by Lord Lawson his time as chancellor of the exchequer – and in particular his recollection that Lord Tebbit, now a leading Euro-sceptic, expressed support for the UK's entry into the ERM in November 1985 while he was party chairman.

Lord Tebbit, the former trade and industry secretary, fiercely denies the charge.

Describing a meeting convened by Mrs Margaret (now Lady) Thatcher, Lord Lawson writes that Lord Tebbit said "that he would be in favour if I thought it would be helpful economically, and added that he felt it would be easy to carry the party".

In response to this version of the meeting in a newspaper serialisation of Lord Lawson's memoirs, Lord Tebbit insisted that the claim was wrong.

"Loyal as I was to the prime minister, I was naturally reluctant to put the boot in against a chancellor who argued for a policy change within his departmental responsibilities," he said.

He added that if Mrs Thatcher had been isolated on the question of the Britain's

stability in European exchange rates, particularly in a single market, was in their interest.

Brushing aside the Anglo-German row about the circumstances of sterling's suspension from the ERM, he insisted that the relationship between the two countries was still good. "Today Germany are our allies and that is how it will stay," he said.

## Poor harvest could force increase in UK bread prices

By David Blackwell

UK BREAD prices may have to rise because of a bad harvest and the rising cost of imports due to the sterling devaluation.

Wet weather damage in southern England in August has left millers facing steep increases in the price of bread-making wheat.

Mr Keith Marsh, sales director of British Bakeries, part of the Rank Hovis McDougall group, said it was inevitable that any increase in the price of flour would lead to an increase in the price of bread.

John Malcolm of the National Farmers' Union said it was not surprising that millers were worried about supplies. The premium payable for bread-making wheat, which

yields less tonnage per acre than feed wheat, had not encouraged farmers to plant it. If millers were concerned about future supplies, he said, they should contract with farmers to guarantee a fixed premium for bread-making wheat.

The UK mills about 3.3m tonnes of wheat for bread each year, importing a shortfall of 500,000 tonnes from other EC countries and Canada. This year the UK harvest is likely to provide only 3m tonnes of bread-making quality, leaving an import requirement of 1.3m tonnes. Canada is also having weather problems, and its export prices are expected to rise by 15 to 20 per cent.

The fall-out from sterling's devaluation is also affecting

the UK wheat market. As part of the Single European Market due to start on January 1, the agrimotor system and the Green Pound are to be abolished.

The system uses MCAs (Monetary Compensatory Amounts) to iron out differentials in prices between EC countries. At present the UK has a negative MCA to stop its wheat exports being too competitive.

Abolition of MCAs would have the effect of raising UK support prices for wheat by 12 per cent at today's values.

Mr Peter Baker, president of the National Association of British and Irish Millers (Nahim), said that wheat of bread-making quality for delivery was at a record £1.62 a tonne this year.

## Pressure group demands reform of legal aid system

FUNDAMENTAL reform of the legal aid system including abolition of the Lord Chancellor's Department and the Legal Aid Board is called for in a report on publicly funded legal services in the 1990s published today, writes Robert Rice.

The report by the Legal Action Group – a legal services pressure group – says the escalating cost of legal aid has led the government into a series of ill-considered cuts.

At the same time, eligibility

levels have fallen so that, for example, the proportion of couples with two dependent children who meet the income conditions for free legal advice dropped from 57 per cent to 22 per cent between 1979 and 1990.

The report says it is time for the first real reconsideration of the objectives and structure of legal aid since 1945.

The overall objective of publicly funded legal services should be equal access to justice for everyone.



On the record: former chancellor of the exchequer Lord Lawson claims Euro-sceptic Lord Tebbit backed entry to the ERM in 1985

chief secretary in 1987 she would not have been able to withstand five years as she did the pressure for sterling to join.

The former chancellor's picture of an ash-faced Mr John Major wondering if he was equal to the job of Treasury

himself," Lord Lawson writes.

Mr Major was appointed in 1987 as Chief Secretary to the Treasury. It was his first cabinet post placing him in charge of public spending and made him the most senior Treasury minister under Lord Lawson.

The former chancellor of the

exchequer wrote: "He found the job far more difficult than anything he had done before and had to work very hard to try to master it. He would come and see me at Number 11 [Downing Street], ash-faced, to unburden himself of his worries."

## Court to consider claim on EC rights

By Catherine Milton

A CHALLENGE to the government's interpretation of a European Community directive on workers' employment rights after takeovers begins in the High Court today.

Nathe, the lecturers' union, says the law should be changed to prevent organisations that acquire public-sector bodies from dismissing workers or imposing inferior pay and conditions.

The union says UK legislation breaches the directive, as the law does not require employers to honour the employment contracts they inherit when acquiring non-profit-making organisations.

Contracts must be honoured when one organisation takes over another in the private sector, and Nathe says the rules should protect all workers.

The government – under pressure from the European Commission – has agreed to add an amendment to its planned employment bill, due in the next parliamentary session, to extend equal protection to all workers.

The Commission, which has argued for five years that the UK rules breach the directive, is also preparing to take the British government to the European Court of Justice.

## TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

### Groups may be streamlined

By Alison Smith and Michael Cassell

SOME of Britain's many trade associations could be amalgamated as part of proposals being considered by the department of trade and industry (DTI) to streamline industrial lobbying.

In their informal meetings with industrialists and businessmen, Mr Michael Heseltine, the president of the board of trade, and Mr Tim Sainsbury, the industry minister, have been asking whether businesses are confident that they are getting value for money from their membership of a range of associations.

Government ministers are

seriously and which they regard as less important, Mr Heseltine and his colleagues have a powerful way of putting pressure on those they see as less valuable.

The Chemical Industries Association (CIA), for example, charges its 220 members using a formula based on turnover and the actual number of employees.

The CIA has a turnover of £4.2m a year and the minimum charge is £3,650.

The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry has 100 members which are charged between £14,000 and £180,000 a year.

achieved a mere 1.1 per cent a year, but behind Japan's 2.9 per cent. Again, what was remarkable was the deterioration of others; Japan's annual rate of productivity growth has been 8.1 per cent between 1960 and 1975 and Italy's 5.8 per cent.

Not to fall further behind was an achievement of a kind, but no cause for ecstasy, but in manufacturing, where labour productivity was (and is) still further behind levels achieved in more successful economies than elsewhere in the British economy, the UK started to catch up, as shown in the top chart.

Labour productivity in manufacturing grew 4.8 per cent a year between 1979 and 1989. This was not only vastly better than the 1.1 per cent registered between 1973 and 1979, but also better than the 3.4 per cent of 1960-73. UK performance was behind that of Japan, which managed 5.4 per cent, but well above Germany's 1.8 per cent (no Wirtschaftswunder here).

Presumably, manufacturing did not grow more because it was not profitable enough. Profitability was ground between the nether millstone of rapid rises in real wages, averaging 2.7 per cent a year between 1979 and 1989, and the upper millstone of international competition. Lower investment, it appears, nor closure of inefficiencies.

have raised the return on capital and stimulated more – and more – labour-absorbing investment, both of which were needed in a high unemployment economy.

In the 1990s, productivity growth needs to flow more strongly into profits, which still appear low by international standards. Remarkably, in view of the recession, labour productivity in manufacturing rose 5 per cent between the third quarter of 1990 and last July, but the rise in real earnings, still more than 2 per cent a year, has eroded much of the benefit for profits.

Similarly, there will be no contribution to competitiveness from last month's depreciation of sterling if it is offset by another wave of wage inflation. Productivity growth is excellent, but higher growth of output depends on the course of wages and profits as well.

Martin Wolf

\* Supply Side Performance in the 1990s Treasury bulletin, summer 1992



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The Prague Karlstein Golf Club, the first 18 hole course in Prague, has been designed as a championship course in a beautiful natural park beneath the famous Karlstein Castle. Equity memberships are now available at 15,000 Swiss Francs which, as well as providing corporate or personal membership to the club, will act as a resalable and increasingly valuable asset. As the club has been designed to act as a focal point for the Prague business community, membership will also provide a variety of contacts and opportunities in this developing and exciting city.

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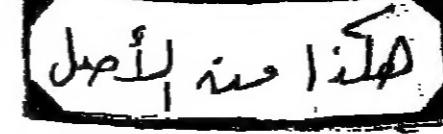
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heads. To tap new markets – including those of our neighbours to the east – talk with DG BANK. We give your ideas perspective.

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# Regions in search of aid

Paul Cheeswright and Chris Tighe on the redrawing of the funding map

**T**HE GOVERNMENT is redrawing its map of assisted areas, the regions classed as "development" or "intermediate" that qualify for financial support. Businesses and councils affected by the recession have been lobbying eloquently for bigger slices of the overall assistance cake.

But the signs are that the scope and size of assistance will be cut just when many regions feel justified in demanding more of it. The period for applications has just ended, and a new map, first promised in 1988, might be published by the end of the year after consultations with the European Commission.

Councils and businesses fear the areas might be reduced and the methods of payment made more restrictive.

"It is unlikely that the coverage of the new map will be greater than now, and it could be somewhat less," the government said in a consultation paper in June.

The government may also take the opportunity of the map redrawing to alter the methods of funding.

Mr Tim Salmonbury, the industry minister, indicated in Birmingham last week that changes might go beyond the redrawing of the map.

Regional aid has been directed mainly in the past at towns caught up in industrial decline or industrial restructuring.

But the recession has changed the geographical pattern of unemployment, providing some southern regions with a strong case for inclusion on the map.

Unemployment percentages on the Isle of Wight, for example, are as high as those in the Newcastle upon Tyne travel-to-work area, which includes parts of Tyneside, Northumberland and County Durham.

Again, the decline of unemployment since 1984, according to analysis by Coopers & Lybrand, accountants, has been much faster in the old blackspots of south Wales than it has been in Southampton or Portsmouth.

Because state subsidies are involved and because the subsidies impinge on the EC's competition rules, the govern-



Source: DTI

ment needs approval of its new map from Brussels.

The availability of EC funding, added to the plethora of UK regeneration instruments introduced since 1979 – enterprise zones, urban development corporations, derelict land grants and so on – has diminished the immediate financial importance of domestic regional aid, which is paid through two main channels:

- Regional selective assistance, designed to improve employment opportunities and aimed at projects that would not go ahead without some subsidy. It is frequently used as a carrot to attract inward investment.
- Regional enterprise grants, designed to help small companies with product and plant investment in Britain, that only inward

Total government spending

THE MID WALES Rural Development Forum has urged the government to extend the area within mid Wales eligible for regional assistance under its regional aid review.

The forum – comprising the Development Board for Rural Wales, the three county councils in its area, five district councils and three Training and Enterprise Commissions – is a lobbying group for more business investment in rural mid Wales.

Four areas in mid Wales have assisted area status: around Brecon and south of Cardigan are development areas; while north-west Meirionnydd and parts of Ystradgynlais, above Swansea, are lower-rated intermediate areas.

The rest of rural mid Wales, which has suffered in the past few years from the drop in farming income, is not designated for any form of assistance.

The forum is pressing for the upgrading of north-west Meirionnydd, around the Trawsfynydd nuclear power station, which is threatened with closure with the loss of some 600 jobs, to development-area status.

Mr R.O. Lewis, chairman of the forum, said there was "a special case for north-west Meirionnydd, given the area's dependence on the power station".

on such schemes has fallen from £518.2m in 1984-85 to £264.6m in 1991-92. That is not simply because the government has tightened its purse strings. It is also the result of a policy switch in the mid 1980s: the system of automatic entitlement to funds for projects in the assisted areas through the regional development grant was abandoned in favour of discretionary funding, where projects are examined case by case before a commitment is made to support them.

Investment can strengthen a weak economic base and such investment will not be attracted without assisted-area status.

The Isle of Wight emphasises its persistent unemployment and a fragile economic base.

Telford in Shropshire wants to retain assisted-area status because its workforce is growing so quickly that it cannot be absorbed by expansion of local companies, so it needs assistance to draw inward investment.

Staffordshire wants to retain the firm a year that has been coming through regional selective assistance, arguing that it has very little access to other public funding apart from derelict-land grant and that loss of funds would skew its economic development programmes.

There is no evidence that, in working its way through the competing claims of disadvantage, the government is examining the fundamental purpose of regional policy.

There has been no debate on the extent to which the existing instruments of regional policy work towards what the government defines as its broad objective: "to reduce regional imbalances in employment opportunities".

The fact that, for example, northern England complains of "structural unemployment for 60 years" and over the past 20 years a rate of unemployment 50 per cent above the average for Great Britain, raises the obvious point of whether there is value in the existing instruments of regional policy.

Is the flaw in the instruments or does fault lie elsewhere? Should regional policy be redefined?

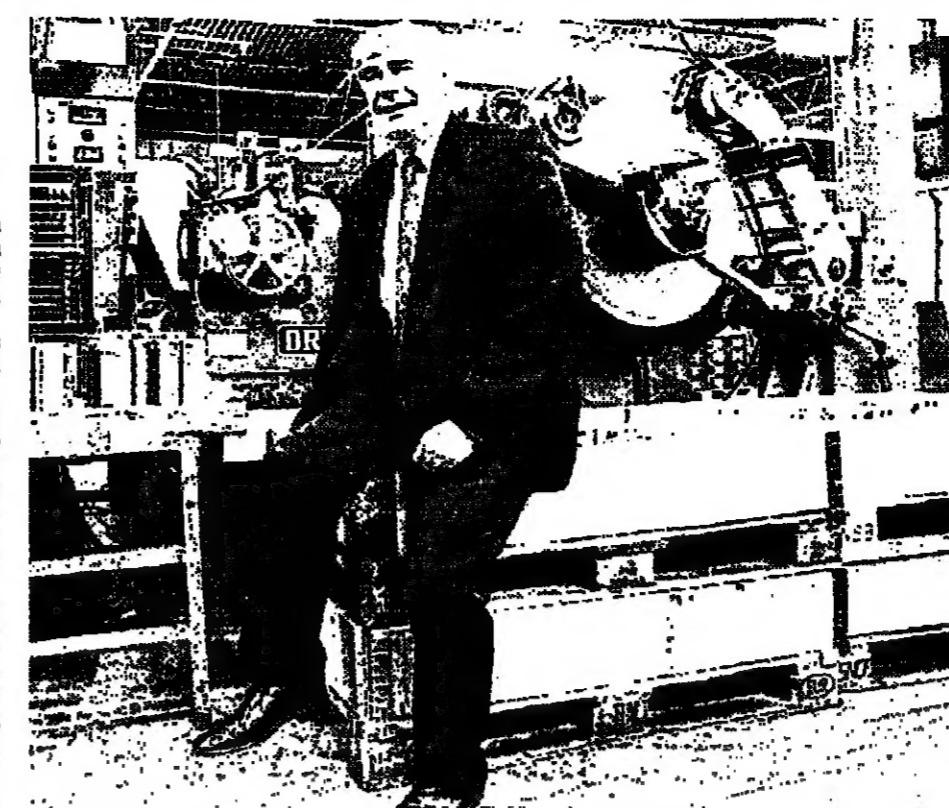
Absence of such debate suggests that the new map will be changed by tinkering, perhaps taking out parts of Wales and Cheshire, perhaps inserting parts of the East Midlands, southern coastal areas, north Kent, the Essex and Lincolnshire coasts.

There is also the political operation to consider. Broadly, if the government stays with the existing map, it will benefit Labour areas – while if it spreads the map into the south, it will benefit Conservative areas.

Aided by grants, Grorud has since become one of Consett's biggest companies, with 330 employees, diversifying successfully beyond door and window fittings, its original business, into stair lifts and precision engineering.

Thanks to Consett's development-area status Grorud has received aid totalling £1.5m towards a total capital spend of £5m.

The company, whose Consett



David D'Arcy, Grorud's finance director, is looking to grants to cover expansion costs

## Newcastle zone strives to retain assisted-area status

By Chris Tighe

ASSISTED-AREA status attracted the Norwegian company Grorud to Consett, County Durham, in 1981, the year after the town lost its steelworks and became a symbol of the last manufacturing recession.

Aided by grants, Grorud has since become one of Consett's biggest companies, with 330 employees, diversifying successfully beyond door and window fittings, its original business, into stair lifts and precision engineering.

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towards a total capital spend of £5m.

The company, whose Consett

operations will this year turn

over £20m, is expanding there

and has bought land beside its

factories for another develop-

ment, pencilled in for 1994. Its

target is to increase its Consett

payroll to 500.

Now it is waiting to see

whether the Newcastle travel-

to-work area, which includes

Consett, wins its fight to remain a development area. If, as is locally feared, it is demoted to intermediate-area status, offering lower grants, the timescale of the firm's expan-

sion would be affected. Mr David D'Arcy, Grorud's finan-

cial director, says:

"We'd have to defer it, we'd

have to generate sufficient

revenue to fill the gap," he says. He would, he says, be looking to DA grants to cover 30 per cent to 35 per

cent of the cost.

Grorud exemplifies the pull-

ing power of DA status. Its

Oslo-based parent, wanting a

British base to sell into the

European Community, selected

Consett from a number of

DAs.

Economic development bodi-

ies and local authorities in the

Newcastle area estimate that

regional selective assistance

since 1984 has totalled £68m,

creating or safeguarding more

than 15,000 jobs.

In 1984-85, the area suffered a

net loss of 9,600 manufacturing

jobs. In Derwentside, which

includes Consett, Mr John

Pearson, industrial develop-

ment officer, estimates that

four-fifths of today's industrial

jobs were created in the 1980s.

The worry locally is that the

government will base its

review solely on a "snapshot"

of present unemployment

rates. In that league table,

Newcastle travel-to-work area

has slipped to about 50th place

out of 322, as other areas have

risen because of the recession.

Newcastle area's case is that

its structural economic difficulties

are far from solved: as evi-

dence, it points to high

long-term and under-55 unem-

ployment. Demotion from DA

status, it is argued, would

undermine the job-creating

potential of public-sector devel-

opments to which more than

£600m investment has been

committed.

"The job is far from com-

plete," Mr Pearson says. "We

still have persistent unemploy-

ment." Newcastle area is lob-

ying hard. But so are dozens

of others.

## Big rise in jobless at Devon resort

By Richard Evans

ILFRACOMBE, the north Devon resort, is the unexpected name at the top of the national league table for the sharpest increase in unemployment over the past year. The town hopes to regain the status of assisted area that it lost eight years ago.

Parts of Devon face heavy unemployment because of cuts in traditional industries and because of failure in the absence of government incentives to attract new jobs.

Local authorities have applied for the retention of assisted-area status in Plymouth and the restoration of such status in four zones: Barnstaple and Ilfracombe, Bideford, Torbay and Totnes.

Unemployment in Ilfracombe is running at 21 per cent and the increase over the past year has been 36.6 per cent. The story of Ilfracombe indicates the significance of assisted-area status and its impact on a local economy.

From 1986 to 1989, virtually the whole of north Devon enjoyed development-area status, and a number of new industries were attracted to the area. From 1989, only Ilfracombe retained full development-area status.

Since 1984, no incoming manufacturers have gone to the town because of the lack of government grants and incentives, while the staple source of work, tourism, has been affected by structural changes in holiday habits.

There has been a change away from peak season resort-based visitors towards self-catering. The number of bed-spaces in hotels and guest houses in Ilfracombe dropped by 40 per cent between 1976 and 1991. Nothing has arisen to replace the jobs subsequently lost.

A big obstacle that needs tackling is the poor infrastructure, particularly access by road, which is especially difficult in the crowded summer months.

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Stan Woodward  
is Chief Property Surveyor at ITT's London & Edinburgh Insurance Group. And he takes his job home with him every night, devoting much of his free time to the local Fire Liaison Group, educating the community about fire safety.

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In fact, one out of three ITT employees lives and works in Europe. And whether it's ITT Defense and Electronics or ITT Sheraton, these companies and all of our businesses share a

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Or write to: ITT Europe, Ave Louise, 480 B-1050, Brussels, Belgium.

ITT

## NEWS: UK

# DTI to seek responses on debt delays

By Andrew Jack  
and Alison Smith

THE DEPARTMENT OF Trade and Industry is shortly to issue a public consultation document on a requirement for companies to publish in their accounts how promptly they pay their bills.

The document comes in response to comments in the March budget speech in which Mr Norman Lamont, the chancellor, promised action to reduce late payment for small businesses. It follows growing concern from small businesses that they are facing severe financial difficulties because larger companies are delaying payments for several months to conserve their own cash.

Officials are expecting a paper to be ready for circulation within weeks, examining options on how to provide the data and where it should be published. They are keen to strike a balance between the provision of information and a concern that its preparation should not be too demanding.

Calls for action on late payment of debts are likely to be renewed at this week's Tory conference. The government has come under considerable pressure to bring forward such

legislation, but is not convinced that new offences and litigation offer a way forward.

Ministers will undertake to look further at possible solutions once results are available from three pilot projects on dealing with late payment, and after the publication of an overdue European Community consultation paper on the issue expected in January.

Mr Lamont said in his Budget speech that the government planned to amend the 1985 Companies Act to require large companies to state in their annual reports and accounts how quickly they pay their bills. The aim was to introduce the legislation during the current session of parliament, subject to the outcome of consultation.

It is uncertain whether an arrest would take place with police raiding the man's house early in the morning in front of television cameras, as happened when Mr Kevin Maxwell, Mr Ian Maxwell and Mr Larry Trachtenberg were arrested in June this year.

So far, the two Maxwell brothers and Mr Trachtenberg, a financial adviser to the late Robert Maxwell, have been charged with a total of 15 counts of theft and conspiracy to defraud involving £135m.

Mr Kevin Maxwell faces two counts of conspiracy to defraud and six of theft. Mr Trachtenberg faces two of conspiracy to defraud and four of theft. Mr Ian Maxwell faces a charge of conspiracy to defraud.

All three are due to make their next court appearances on December 1.

## Maxwell inquiry arrest expected

By John Mason  
and Nick Kochan

THE SERIOUS Fraud Office is expected to arrest and charge a fourth man early this week in connection with the Maxwell affair.

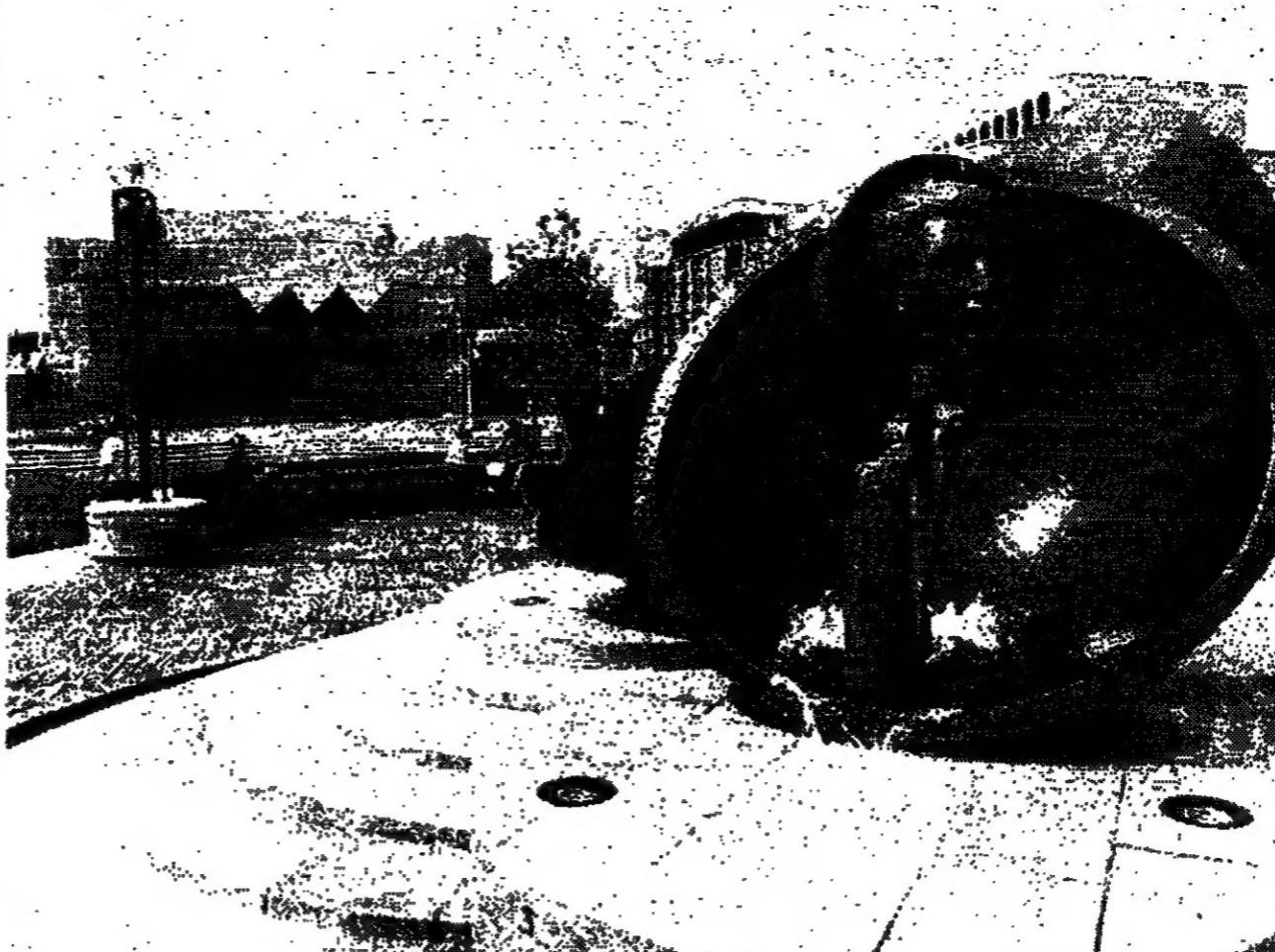
An arrest may arise from the arm of the SFO inquiry which is concentrating on the movement of money from the pension funds into the private companies in the Maxwell empire. This is one of five lines in the SFO investigation.

It is uncertain whether an arrest would take place with police raiding the man's house early in the morning in front of television cameras, as happened when Mr Kevin Maxwell, Mr Ian Maxwell and Mr Larry Trachtenberg were arrested in June this year.

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A view of the International Convention Centre in Birmingham's Broad Street redevelopment area, where delegates will assemble

BIRMINGHAM has started to

come more fresh flowers. Underpasses that have

flag will fly: 12 stars with

primp and preen for next week's European Council meeting in the city, Paul Cheeseright writes.

"The first thing to say is we're going to try and make Birmingham the capital of Europe for four days," the City Council promised.

Away go the graffiti, out

depressed and frightened pedestrians for two decades Streets will be extra clean.

Birmingham Mint is producing special bronze coins: city arms on one side, the symbol

of the UK's Community presidency on the other. A special

for the summit because the EC met about a quarter of the costs of building it.

Journalists who do not arrive early enough will probably be guided into the nearby National Indoor Arena to provide a spectacle in the interregnum between Torvill and Dean and an all-stops-out Carman.

## Fiat to keep Basildon factory

By Andrew Baxter

FIAT IS committed to keeping the former Ford tractor factory at Basildon, Essex, as one of the main plants in its worldwide agricultural equipment business, said Mr Giorgio Garuzzo, chief operating officer at the Italian vehicle producer.

The plant, which produces diesel engines and undertakes final assembly of Ford tractors, was acquired by Fiat as part of last May's merger of Ford and Fiat's agricultural and construction equipment businesses, to form NH Geotech.

Fiat is the 12th-largest non-British company in the UK with 8,000 employees last year. Employment at Basildon has fallen from about 2,800 in 1991 to just under 2,000. Most of the cuts were made last September when a fall-off in sales of agricultural vehicles, especially in Europe, led to 850 job losses.

Speaking in London, Mr Garuzzo said Fiat intended to retain the twin-track strategy for Basildon - producing tractors and also engines for use on NH Geotech equipment.

New products would be developed, and investment in the plant was assured, he said.

The Fiat executive said there would be further rationalisation elsewhere in NH Geotech, although the company hoped to avoid plant closures.

## Broad support for Cadbury proposals shown

By Andrew Jack

NEARLY TWO THIRDS of directors, stockbrokers and auditors support the proposal to require companies to disclose their level of compliance with the Cadbury code on corporate governance, a survey showed yesterday.

Two thirds also believe that self-regulation is better than statutory enforcement in improving the way companies are run.

The study of 354 senior executives is published in the latest

edition of the Arthur Andersen Corporate Register.

The Cadbury committee on the financial aspects of corporate governance reported during the summer and is due to publish a revised version before the end of the year.

One of its suggestions is that all companies should be required to show compliance with its code of practice as a condition for a stock market listing.

In an indication of dissatisfaction with the present situation, only 23 per cent of the

survey believed leading institutional shareholders already carried out many of the functions proposed by Cadbury for non-executive directors.

Just over half believed that financial markets would provide tougher sanctions than external regulators against companies failing to reach accepted standards of corporate governance.

Smaller companies disagreed more strongly with the Cadbury recommendations such as the compulsory establishment of audit committees, arguing

that they would introduce costly additional expense and bureaucracy. More than half strongly agreed with the statement that the role of chairman and chief executive should be split, and almost as many that annual accounts should disclose directors' remuneration split between salary and performance pay.

Sixty per cent agreed with the Cadbury suggestion that audit committees should be composed entirely of non-executive directors.

Only half of the companies responding currently had any type of audit committee, and nearly a quarter of those that did said it met just once each year. Only 9 per cent said its terms of reference resembled those proposed.

Of those that had audit committees, more than two fifths said they had a beneficial effect on company performance.

Two thirds of companies had a remuneration committee, of which about half met once each year. Most of those were constituted as recommended by Cadbury.

## Accountants in ascendancy

By Andrew Jack

TEN TIMES as many senior executives of quoted British companies are chartered accountants as are engineers or surveyors, the latest edition of the Arthur Andersen Corporate Register published by Hemmington Scott shows.

From a database of more than 15,000 directors and senior officers in the 2,000 quoted companies, 2,100 or nearly 15 per cent are qualified accountants.

Just over 200 are either char-

tered engineers or surveyors, while only 41 have MBA degrees.

Less than 3 per cent of the total are women, and less than 5 per cent of them hold executive directorships.

Nearly 900 went to Oxford or Cambridge University, and the single most common school - with 194 former pupils - was Eton.

There are 730 with some sort of honour, including 320 with the CBE, 347 knights and 104 lords. There are also two princes and two reverends

with positions on boards.

The average male director is aged 53. The oldest is Lord Shawcross, the non-executive director of Caffyns and a director of the Observer, who is 90. The youngest, at 26, is Mr Jean-Jacques Murray, director of US operations for Nu-Swift Golf, the most popular recreation, which was mentioned by 1,532 people.

Arthur Andersen Corporate Register, Hemmington Scott, City Innovation Centre, 36-37 Whiskin Street, London EC1R 0BP. Twice a year, £150.

### REQUEST FOR BIDDING TO EXPORT SURPLUS PETROLEUM PRODUCTS - FUEL OILS (LOW/HIGH POUR) - FOR NOVEMBER 1992

The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) is inviting interested Limited Liability Companies (Ltd) and Public Limited Companies (Plc) to apply for approval to bid for export of fuel Oils (Low/High Pour) which are in excess of domestic requirement during the month of November 1992.

#### METHOD OF APPLICATION

1. Interested limited liability (Ltd) companies and public limited companies (Plc) should address their applications to:

The Managing Director  
Pipelines & Products Marketing Co Ltd  
(Subsidiary of NNPC)  
308, Adeola Odewa Street  
Victoria Island  
LAGOS

Applications should reach the above stated address not later than 15 October 1992.

2. Applications shall be required to pay a non-refundable bidding fee of US\$50,000.00 (Fifty Thousand US Dollars only) or the Naira equivalent at the prevailing official exchange rate in certified bank cheque payable to PPMC. Please note that the bidding is NON-REFUNDABLE. Consequently, PPMC shall not entertain in future any request for refund of the US\$50,000.00 bidding fee especially from unsuccessful bidders.

3. The non-refundable fee of \$50,000.00 entitles all bidders to participate in the monthly exercise for six months only.

4. On completion of 1 - 3 above, only successful bidders shall be given letters of offer by PPMC. The letter of offer shall specify the product type, quantity, price, specification, lifting date range, other terms and conditions of offer.

5. All successful bidders shall be entitled to a cargo size of fifty thousand (50,000) metric tons plus or minus 10% ex Okrika/TUMA.

6. All successful bidders shall be required to complete a PERFORMANCE BOND with an acceptable and reputable bank in Nigeria or with the National Insurance Corporation of Nigeria (NICON) only.

7. Successful bidders shall be required to open a confirmed and irrevocable Letter of Credit in favour of PPMC and shall incorporate all terms and conditions of offer therein.

**NOTE: APPLICATION ENVELOPES SHOULD BE CLEARLY MARKED  
'NOVEMBER 1992 EXPORT BID'**

The BID BOND and PERFORMANCE BOND formats shall be given to successful applicants to administer.

### CONTRACTS & TENDERS

The State Property Agency (SPA) is inviting a public tender in two stages for the sale of one part of SPA's business share in

**Albertfalva Cernázo Kft.**  
(Albertfalva Thread Milling Co. Ltd.)  
(Budapest, XI. Fonyod u.2-4)

Basic capital of the company: HUF 405 million of which: HUF 347.6 million, i.e. 92.49% is owned by the SPA HUF 30.4 million, i.e. 7.51% is owned by the local government.

From its entitlement, the SPA:

is offering a business share of HUF 69 million, consisting a 17.04% share for the employees who are provided with an option of 2 years,

selling a share of HUF 40.5 million, or 10% for restoration warrants (an obligation optional to the board of directors of the SPA in case of one buyer),

offering the value of HUF 265.1 million, representing a 55.46% share to be sold by competitive tender.

Main profile of the company: manufacturing of textile lining for rubber tires, manufacturing of belts and sale of industrial sewing yarn. The competition document and information material on the company is available for:

HUF 15,000 for Hungarians USD 200 for foreigners to be paid in forints, to the account of the SPA No. MNB 232-90107-8024, or in foreign currency to the account of the SPA No. MNB 232-90107-8031.

When making the payment, please indicate:

"Albertfalva Kft TENDER"

Tender document including details are available from October 1, 1992 from the State Property Agency (Alami Vagyonigyoitak) 1133 Budapest, Posztai u. 56, room 607.

Tender submissions may be made only on the basis of the tender documents and the purchase of the documentation is a prerequisite of participation in the tender.

Tenders shall be submitted in 5 copies in Hungarian and English or German language, in a closed envelope not bearing the name of the firm, to the place and until the deadline indicated in the tender invitation, or by mail against a notice of receipt.

The envelope shall bear the following: "Albertfalva Kft polyaliz."

The participant is obliged to mark the original with the word "EREDETI" meaning original. In case of any deviation between the original and the copies, the offers marked as above shall be considered valid.

Submission date of the offer: at 12 noon on December 1, 1992 Submission place of the offer: Alami Vagyonigyoitak, 1133 Budapest, Posztai u. 56.

More information is available from the Managing Director of the company, Mr. Koen Mihlyfi: phone No.: 1669-013 fax No.: 1669-741

### PROCUREMENT NOTICE INVITATION TO PREQUALIFICATION IN-HOUSE POSTAL SERVICE

The London Borough of Islington is proposing to establish a contract for the provision of its Central Mail Services within the Borough.

The Borough is approximately six square miles in area, the successful tenderer will be required to provide a mail service for two hundred and seventy-five premises. The service may consist of all or any of the following:-

- i) Collection and Delivery of Mail Council Wide.
- ii) Collection, Delivery and Sorting of Mail Council Wide.
- iii) Collection, Delivery Despatch and Sorting of both Council and External Mail.

Those interested in tendering for the provision of this service should write requesting application documents from:

T J WILSON  
CENTRAL PURCHASING UNIT  
17 ISLINGTON PARK STREET  
LONDON N1 1QJ  
FAX NO: 071 477 2888

Requests to be received no later than 5pm Wednesday 14th October 1992.

### LEGAL NOTICES

**E BISHOP DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED**  
Registered number: 20137, Name of Business:  
Estate Agents, Developers, Town Planners, Trade  
Classifications: 22 - Development, operation of  
Administrative Functions: 22 September 1992, Name  
of person appointing: Joint Administrators  
Responsible: National Westminster Bank PLC, John  
Adams, 100 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AA, office  
holder number: 6339, I M Walker, 100 Newgate Street,  
London EC1A 7AA, office holder number: 2104, Address: PO  
Box 262, Orchard House, 10 Albion Place, Melton Mowbray, LE12 8PS.

**ASH SCAFFOLDING COMPANY LIMITED**  
Registered number: 1956949, Nature of  
Business: Scaffolding Supply and Pl. Trade  
Classifications: 22 - Development, operation of  
Administrative Functions: 17 September 1992, Name  
of person appointing: National Westminster Bank PLC,  
John Adams, 100 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AA, office  
holder number: 6339, I M Walker, 100 Newgate Street,  
London EC1A 7AA, office holder number: 2104, Address: PO  
Box 262, Orchard House, 10 Albion Place, Melton Mowbray, LE12 8PS.

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EDINBURGH	5
NICE	12

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THE SERIOUS ALTERNATIVE

## BUILDING CONTRACTS

### Japanese theatre complex



### Power plant at Tooting hospital

Wandsworth Health Authority has awarded a £3.2m contract for a combined heat and power plant at St George's Hospital, Tooting to MOWLEM ENGINEERING of Bromborough, Wirral and Peterlee, County Durham, a division of John Mowlem Construction.

The turnkey contract is for the design, procurement, installation and commissioning of a 4.4 MW European Gas Turbine Typhoon, a 12 tonnes per hour unfired heat recovery steam boiler and gas compressor, together with all building and civil engineering work.

The existing boiler house will be modified to accommodate the boiler and electrical switchgear and a new gas turbine hall will also accommodate, at first floor level, a new control room as an extension to the boiler plant control room.

### Bridge project

RENDL PALMER & TROTTON, which has designed the £2m repair and refurbishment of the Manama Sirra Causeway bridges in Bahrain, in joint venture with Ismail Khanji Consultants, has begun prequalification of contractors.

The work, involving refurbishment of the reinforced concrete bridge decks and the supply, installation, testing and maintenance of an impressed current cathodic protection system on the top surface, will be supervised by RPT, a High-Point Group subsidiary.

It will also involve the removal of 12,000 sq metres of asphalt surfacing and underlying concrete. Refurbishment work includes concrete repair to central reserve parapet beams, footways and deck soft-sfits and repainting of steel beams. Work on the six-month contract will begin in November.

**SCHAL ASSOCIATES INC** has won a contract for construction of a US\$450m (£260m) performing arts centre, the Second National Theatre, in Tokyo.

The 741,000 sq ft five-storey building will include three separate theatres with a total of 3,500 seats.

The largest theatre will feature a 1,900 seat auditorium for opera, similar in scale and style to classic European opera houses.

Schal is constructing the building in a joint venture

team headed by Takenaka, one of Japan's leading construction services companies.

The arts centre is being built for the Japanese Ministry of Construction in the Shinjuku area of Tokyo.

It is called the Second National Theatre because there is already an older National Theatre building used exclusively for traditional Japanese performing arts.

The project was one of a number identified in bilateral trade agreements between the P&O.

### £20m aircraft facility in Cairo

**TRAFAVGAR HOUSE TECHNOLOGY**, in association with Arab Consulting Engineers, has been awarded a contract for the masterplan development, design and construction supervision of a £20m aircraft hangar and maintenance facility for EgyptAir in Cairo.

The company will have total responsibility for the technical study stage of the development which includes examining areas like overhaul and maintenance schedules and practices, chemical effluent disposal, nose-in/tail-in docking options and manpower requirements.

Design work will be completed by April and construction is scheduled to begin by late 1993.

### £34m workload for Lovell

**LOVELL GROUP** has been awarded work valued at over £34m, the construction division contributing £20.7m and Partnertech £13.6m.

Walter Lilly has obtained 14.7m of orders in the London area comprising office projects for Paribas in central London worth £1m for the Wellcome Foundation at Beckenham for £1.7m, for SCOR (UK) Reinsurance at £1.37m and for bomb damage at the Baltic Exchange for £700,000.

Lovell Partnerships has recently secured £13.6m of new business in seven partnership housing developments around the country, representing in excess of 400 new homes.

In the west, a partnership

with Thamesdown Borough Council and Knightstone Housing Association will provide 109 homes in Swindon and a further scheme with Ogvalle Housing Co-operative will result in 115 homes.

In the north west, two projects have been received: the first, at Salford, in partnership with Irwell Valley Housing Association, will be a development of 38 homes; the second, at Hyde, Cheshire is for a mixed tenure scheme of 99 homes for sale and rent through a partnership with Tameside Borough Council and Portico Housing Association.

In Leeds the company has two projects, which will provide a total of 78 homes.

The remaining contracts

in addition, MDW has won a £2.4m contract to build workshop units and a resource centre in Motherwell for British Steel (Industry).

Eden Construction has been awarded a contract worth £1.6m for reconstruction and overlay works on the A64 York bypass and Henry Jones Construction has won a £2m maintenance contract for Chichester District Council.

The remaining contracts

### £26m orders awarded to Lilley Group

**LILLEY GROUP** has won £26m of new orders during the months of August and September. Of specific interest is a housing contract in Dumfries, worth £4.8m. The contract, awarded to Robison & Davidson, consists of the construction of 156 houses for sale and rent and is utilising part of Robison & Davidson's landbank; work will commence immediately and is due to be completed within 21 months.

MDW has won a £2.4m contract to build workshop units and a resource centre in Motherwell for British Steel (Industry).

Eden Construction has been awarded a contract worth £1.6m for reconstruction and overlay works on the A64 York bypass and Henry Jones Construction has won a £2m maintenance contract for Chichester District Council.

The remaining contracts

were awarded throughout the group: the Scottish operations, Lilley Construction Scotland and MDW - £3.5m; the northern-based companies, Eden Construction and Robison & Davidson - £3.1m; the Midlands operations, Lilley Construction Midlands, Standard Construction and Piper Buildings - £2.5m; the south of England-based companies, Henry Jones Construction and Lilley Construction Southern - £1.2m.

The remaining contracts

## PEOPLE

### Scotland's latest press baron



from the veteran journalist Kenneth Harris.

Scotland has a new newspaper tycoon. Ian Macpherson, who takes over the chairmanship of Caledonian Newspaper Publishing this week, will head a company which publishes The Herald, Scotland's leading quality daily, and the Glasgow Evening Times, the UK's fifth largest evening paper.

The 58-year-old Macpherson, an accountant by training, is keen to play down the idea that he will behave like a traditional newspaper proprietor.

He describes himself as a professional chairman and points out that since he lives in St Andrews, 100 miles from Caledonian's Glasgow HQ, he will not be continually popping in to host lunches and interfere in editorial management.

Caledonian, a 27m management buy-out from Lonrho in May, has been looking for a new chairman to take over

the financial side of ICI since joining in 1978, is the fifth member of a small team which was set up by Sir Denis Henderson, ICI's current chairman. Whereas many big companies use outside merchant bankers to vet potential acquisitions, ICI is of such a size that it can justify its own in-house team.

The team advises the ICI board on acquisitions, mergers and divestments, particularly on aspects such as scale, resources, merits and priorities.

Since it was established, the unit has examined over 8,000 companies and been involved in 300 transactions.

Probably the best known of the executives who have passed through the ICI acquisitions team is David Nash, Grand Metropolitan's current finance director. After 12 years with ICI, Nash was appointed group finance director of Cadbury Schweppes in 1987 before joining Grandmet in December 1988.

The move follows Robb Mar-

gets elevation to the main

board of ICI from his position

as chief executive of the Tioxide group. Stillwell's predecessor at polyurethanes, Alan Federer, is promoted to Margate's job. He is swapping Brussels for Hammersmith, a less than exotic part of west London.

Carter, who has worked on

with good City connections. Being a Scotsman clearly helped, but Macpherson describes himself as more a "cousin" of Scotland's so-called "financial mafia" than a fully-fledged "brother". He has spent a large part of his career south of the border after qualifying with Peat Marwick and Dun & Bradstreet's Alliance Trust. He was a partner of W Greenhill, the London stockbrokers, and opened Manufacturers Hanover's Scottish operation.

In 1979, he joined the British Linen Bank and rose to be deputy chief executive. He is currently chairman and chief executive of Watson & Philip, Britain's third largest food distributor, and non-executive chairman of Low & Bonar, a packaging and paper group. He also sits on the board of the London Stock Exchange.

Macpherson sees his role at

Caledonian as making sure that it meets its financial targets. However, the combination of the financial constraints of the MBO and the recession are bound to result in "stressful conditions" and Macpherson sees an important part of his task as being a "great encourager of people".

Meanwhile, at the other end of the country, the fifth generation of a provincial newspaper dynasty has started to appear. Kenneth Storey, 23, has been appointed a non-executive director of Portsmouth and Sunderland Newspapers which is headed by his father Sir Richard Storey. Kenneth, who is general manager of The Guardian International, is the fifth generation of the family to be involved in the business which was started by Samuel Storey in 1873. Like his father, who joined the board at the age of 25, Kenneth is a Wykehamist.

## Departures

■ William Petersen, president of SEAGRAM's beverage group and Tropicana Products, is to resign from the company on January 31 next year.

Petersen, who is based in Florida, has decided, because of family considerations, to pursue career opportunities in the north-east of the US.

Before joining Seagram four years ago, he was president of Guinness (America).

Myron Roeder, president of Seagram's international and global marketing, will be responsible for Tropicana's operations until a permanent successor is appointed.

■ Jim Griffis has resigned as group md of THOMAS FRENCH & SONS so that he may continue to assist his wife to recover from her near-fatal road accident earlier this year.

Jeremy Freake, chairman, has assumed the role of group managing director.

■ Peter Daff has resigned from HARRISON INDUSTRIES.

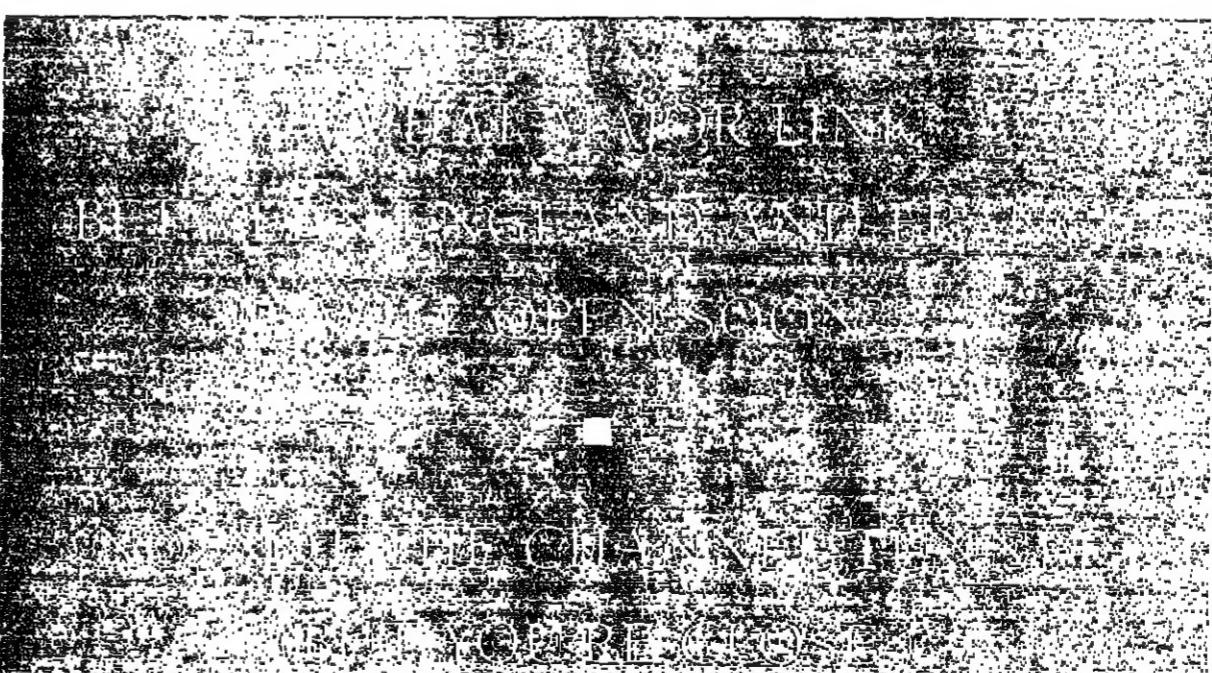
■ Michael Kiley has retired from SMITH & NEPHEW.

■ Richard Rhodes, until recently a director of Warburg Securities, at THE UNION DISCOUNT COMPANY OF LONDON.

■ Ron Yearley, deputy chairman of CIS Information Systems and a member of Ofwat, at CRT GROUP.

■ Michael Cohen, recently retired from Phillips & Drew, at FORMINSTER.

■ S Rajwan has resigned from OWEN & ROBINSON.



You're very close, in fact. The link we speak of is the new Elf station, Clacton Lane, England. Open for business in 1993, it will be a mere stone's throw from the Channel Tunnel.

It will also be one of the largest service stations in the whole of Europe (what else would you expect from France's largest company?), expected to supply petrol to around 4,000 vehicles every day.

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**elf aquitaine**

OUR DEDICATION GOES FURTHER

## THE WEEK AHEAD

## ECONOMICS

**Indicators hint at German slowdown**

THIS week sees the first of the monthly string of statistics on the German real economy. They are expected to show that the west German economy is in mild recession with manufacturing orders and industrial production falling and unemployment rising.

As the west German economy has slowed, employment growth has also eased. Unemployment, which has been rising steadily since the beginning of the year, is expected to increase by 30,000. Most forecasters believe it will continue rising for the rest of the year.

In the UK the economic highlight of the week is last month's retail prices index. The figure is due to be released on Friday morning, shortly before Mr John Major, the prime minister, rises to address the Conservative party at the end of its annual conference in Brighton. Any inflationary effects of sterling's recent devaluation will not yet have fed through to the index, so at least on his inflationary record, Mr Major should have little explaining to do.

The following are some of the other economic highlights and events of the week. The figures in brackets — from MMS International — are the median of economists' forecasts. Today: Luxembourg, EC foreign ministers' meeting; UK, August credit business; Denmark, August current account (£DKr1.5bn); US, September 21-30 car sales (£2m); Canada, September Bank of Canada reserves (£Cdn4bn). Tomorrow: US, Federal open markets committee meeting in Washington; Germany, September unemployment — west (up 20,000), August employment — west (up 10,000); September vacancies — west (down 5,000), September unemployment — east (down 19,000), September short time work — east (down 14,000); UK, Conservative party conference opens in Brighton.

Wednesday: US, August wholesale trade, August consumer credit (£1bn repayment); Aus-



Source: Datapac

tralia, October consumer sentiment, August leading indicators.

Thursday: US, initial claims week ended September 26 (42,000), state benefits week ended September 19, money supply date for week ended September 28; Canada, September housing starts (up 165); Australia, September unem-

ployment rate (11 per cent), September employment (down 2,500); Germany, parliamentary debate on Maastricht in Bonn.

Friday: UK, September retail prices index (up 0.3 per cent on month, up 3.5 per cent on year), excluding mortgages (up 4 per cent on year); Norway, September CPI (up 2.3 per cent on year); Sweden, September unemployment rate, September trade balance; Canada, September employment growth (up 0.1 per cent), September unemployment rate (11.6 per cent).

Today: Luxembourg, EC foreign ministers' meeting; UK, August credit business; Denmark, August current account (£DKr1.5bn); US, September 21-30 car sales (£2m); Canada, September Bank of Canada reserves (£Cdn4bn).

Tomorrow: US, Federal open markets committee meeting in Washington; Germany, September unemployment — west (up 20,000), August employment — west (up 10,000); September vacancies — west (down 5,000), September unemployment — east (down 19,000), September short time work — east (down 14,000); UK, Conservative party conference opens in Brighton.

Wednesday: US, August wholesale trade, August consumer credit (£1bn repayment); Aus-

Emma Tucker

## CONFERENCES

7 October 1992  
"Managing the Implementing of Strategy"  
"The consequences of the culture gap"  
2 papers at the London School of Economics in a Seminar on Strategy for Corporate and IS Strategists and Planners.  
Contact: LSE  
Telephone: 071 955 7227  
Fax: 071 955 7676

## DIVIDEND &amp; INTEREST PAYMENTS

## ■ TODAY

Admiral 1.7p  
ASDA Group 0.85p  
Barbour Index 4.85p  
Betterware 2.21p  
Bradford Prop. Tst 10.12%  
Cum Prt 2.59p  
Do. Un. Ln. Stk. '92-97 £3.50  
Braims (TF & JH) 2.25p  
Do. Non Vtg. 2.25p  
Centex \$0.10  
Chuo Tst. Asia Ltd. Fltg. to Fixed Rt. Nts. 2000 \$2583.  
02

CIA 1.32p  
Clarke (T.) 1.26p  
Cleveland Place 3 3/4 % Irred.  
Deb. £1.875  
Do. 4 1/4 % Irred. Deb. £2.125  
Eastern Electricity 11.85p  
East Midland Electricity 12p  
Edinburgh Inv. Tst. 5 3/4 %  
Deb. 1998 £2.675  
Fife Indmar 0.5p  
Five Arrows Chile Fd. Ptg.  
Shs. \$0.30  
Grand Metropolitan 4.6p  
Hampson Inds. 1.773p  
Hazlewood Foods 3.9p  
Imperial Chemical Inds.  
21p  
Invergordon Distillers 2.8p  
Lasmio 2.3p  
London Electricity 11.8p  
Low & Bonar 2.7p  
Manweb 12.8p  
Met. Water Grand Junction  
Water Works 3% Deb. £1.50  
Do. West Middlesex Water  
Works 3% Deb. £1.50  
Midlands Electricity 11.6p  
Misys 3.83p  
NFC Var. Fltg. 1.4p  
Northern Electric 13p  
NORWEB 12.4p  
Portmeirion Potters 2.25p  
P & P 0.7p  
Real Time Control 3p  
Regional Electricity

Companies Pack. Units  
£121.7483

Relyon 1.75p  
Scottish American Inv. 1.08p  
SEEBOARD 12.25p  
Southern Electric 11.76p  
South Wales Electricity 13.6p  
12.15p  
Spear (JW) 2.5p  
Stavert Zigomal 18.75p  
Sytone 6.3p  
Tomorrows Leisure 1.375p  
TSB 3.15p  
United Kingdom 21 2/4 %  
Annuities £0.625  
Do. 2 3/4 % Annuities £0.6875  
Do. 2 1/2 % Consd. £0.625  
Do. 8% Treasury Ln. 2002/  
06 £4  
Do. 3% Treasury £1.50  
Williams Hldgs. 5p  
Yorkshire Electricity 12.53p  
Zetters 4p

## ■ TOMORROW

Bampton Property 7 1/4 %  
Unsec. Ln. 1991/96 £3.875  
Bellway 9.5% Red Prf. 2014  
4.75p  
Bespak 5.5p  
Colman (E. Alec) Invs. 9%  
1st Mort. Deb. 1987/92 £4.50  
CRT 1.825p  
Ellis & Everard 4.8p  
Greenalls 7% Irred. Un. Ln.  
£3.50  
Do. 8 1/4 % Irred. Un. Ln.  
£4.0625  
Clark (Matthew) 9.25p  
McMullen 6 1/2 % Cum. Pf.  
3.25p  
Do. 10 1/2 % Cum. Pf. 5.25p  
Molynx 1.3p  
Primadonna 2.5p  
Wheway 1p  
Whitbread 9% Un. Ln. 1997/  
2001 £4.50  
Williamson Tea 10p

■ WEDNESDAY

Ashtead 3.025p  
Bradford & Bingley Building  
Soc. 13% PIBS £650

British Assets Tst. 1.04p  
Capita 2.1p  
Far Eastern Text. 4% 2006  
\$400

Osaka Gas 10.25% Nts. 1996  
£520

Rexmore 1.05p  
River & Mercantile Tst. Inc.  
Shs. 2.25p

Scottish Natl. Tst. Inc. Shs.  
2.1p

Taylor Woodrow 0.5p

■ THURSDAY

OCTOBER 6

AIM 5p

Assoc. Brit. Consultants 2.1p

Barclays 9.15p

Blacks Leisure 2.25p

Fleming Enterprise Inv. 3.2p

Inch Kenneth Kajang 2p

Lao 1 Class B Fltg. Rate Nts.  
2035 £3096.81

Royal Bk. of Can. Int'l. Cap.  
Fd. Prf. \$0.02

Salomon Auction Rate Nts.  
1995 £1066.94

Tomkins 8.12p

Vitaulic 2.5p

■ FRIDAY

OCTOBER 7

Aerospace Eng. 0.5p

Alliance Tst. 14p

Do. 4% Cum. Pf. £1.40

Do. 4 1/4 % Cum. Pf. £1.4875

Do. 5% Cum. Pf. £1.75

Amicable Smaller  
Enterprises Tst. 1.7p

Bankes (Sidney C.) 5.5p

Bradford & Bingley Building  
Soc. Fltg. Rate Nts. 1998  
£257.65

Chieftain 2.1p

■ SATURDAY

OCTOBER 16

EBSR 8.75% 1996

Ecu887.50

■ SUNDAY

OCTOBER 11

Islington Corp. 12.85% Red.  
Stk. 2017 £5.65

## RESULTS DUE

MORE bad news from the recession in construction property and housing sectors is expected on Thursday with three victims reporting results.

Higgs & Hill took exceptional charges of £20.9m and reported a pre-tax loss in the year to December 31, and is expected to post minimal interim pre-tax profits of £500,000-£800,000. The interim dividend will likely be slashed to 15p (6p).

Tilstock Johnson, the brick and building materials manufacturer, has also been having a tough time. Interim pre-tax profits of £3m-£4m (£7.2m) are forecast. Its interim dividend also looks under pressure and could be cut to 1p or even a halfpenny (2.25p). However hopes are brighter for Tilbury Douglas. Interim profits of

£2.5m (£2.7m) are expected and the 10p dividend looks safe.

The company is expected to maintain its reputation as one of the few in the construction sector to be coming through the recession relatively unscathed.

Grimpian Holdings, the Scottish mini-conglomerate which set the ball rolling in the bidding for Macarthy last year, is expected to show on Wednesday an interim profit on its continuing activities of £2.5m, down from £3.4m.

The picture is complicated by the sale of the Mitre business, maker of footballs and other sporting goods. The largest part of Grampian is the animal pharmaceuticals division.

The performance of the tourist retailing side is traditionally biased towards the second half,

## SWEDEN

The FT proposes to publish this survey on November 19 1992. Should you be interested in acquiring more information about this survey or how to advertise please contact:

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PlanBca, DRI/McGraw-Hill, ENI conference on privatization, trade, and reform, investment roundtable, industry-specific panels and half-day energy symposium. Contact Corinna Redondo on

<div data-bbox="818 691 886 699"

## MANAGEMENT

John Gapper looks at an innovative IBM retraining programme

**A**drienne Goodman, a worker at IBM's printed circuit board plant in Austin, Texas, was less than enthusiastic when it was first suggested she should take some maths lessons. "I had been here for 10 years and I did not see why I should go back to school," she says. Goodman was only convinced when the lessons allowed her to take on more responsibility.

"There used to be process technicians everywhere in here. They used to run the place," she says. These days, workers exert more control over how the plant runs. "I feel I am a part of it," she says. Like the other retrained workers, Goodman is now known as a technical associate.

IBM's effort at Austin is a rare beacon of hope for the corporation as it tries to raise profitability: the plant's success shows that investment in skills can improve profits. Yet it is still moving away from its tradition of employment security: it expects to cut its worldwide workforce by about 40,000 this year through voluntary reductions.

The company has a number of measures for the success of the training initiative. It says that productivity has doubled in the panel plant and at a nearby card assembly plant, where the components are assembled on the boards.

It also estimates that stockpiles have been reduced by 40 per cent, production has increased and there has been a

5 per cent quality improvement.

The re-education effort at Austin was launched in 1985, when the plant's future was in doubt. The plant's quality was low, it was over-staffed – three workers carried out indirect tasks, such as engineering maintenance, for every one direct production worker – and it was estimated to be losing \$60m (£33.7m) a year. It needed fewer, but more skilled, workers.

Because production methods were then unsophisticated, IBM could instead have relocated to a lower-wage economy such as Mexico and employed the same number of workers more cheaply. But Abe Clay, plant manufacturing manager, says its tradition of retaining workers made that option unlikely.

IBM instead decided to use the plant as a test-site for a work re-organisation plan known as Manufacturing Technical Associates (MTA).

The principle was to combine a cut in the indirect workforce

with re-training for the others so they could take on broader tasks. The hope was that the newly-educated workers could both improve quality levels and cut the cycle times.

The company devised a new job structure, based on seven grades, cutting out more than 20 former job classifications.

Those on the lowest grade spend more than 90 per cent of their time on production work, and the remainder on technical tasks such as materials analysis.

As the worker acquires more skills, and higher pay, the proportions gradually alter.

**E**nough those in the first grade required mastery of basic statistical process control and systems administration, along with production and technical skills. This required up to 40 hours of skill-based classroom training, as well as basic maths and reading for those who needed to supplement high school classes.

Clay says any deficiency in basic education was less striking than the unmet potential of the 800-strong direct workforce. "There were a lot of people who you would have said were incapable of doing this or that until you tested it. It made me think that we have not really tapped the residual skills of a lot of the workforce," he says.

However, the change in work style is not entirely painless.

Jerry Schiappa, a Grade 5 worker, says the new structure

has clarified what was previously a murky grading system and made explicit what the company expects of workers.

"It tells me my limitations. It is the first time I have known what I need to do to get to the next level," he says.

Although the grade structure provides a single ladder to move to what would formerly have been supervisory work, the degree of specialisation increases at the fourth level.

Workers then specialise either in technical manufacturing or quality control, acquiring a series of skill modules.

This has allowed IBM to cut materials handlers and engineers.

Clay says quality control standards have improved markedly. "We are identifying \$250,000 of products each year that we would have shipped out before, but we are just not accepting any more," says Clay. Like Motorola, which has also been praised for training and education efforts linked to quality improvement, the IBM plant is trying to reduce flaws to below one in a million within two years.

The quality improvement drive has provided the clearest incentive for IBM to invest in re-education and training, and to that extent, the demand for higher skills is unlikely to abate. IBM has now put about two-thirds of its 30,000 direct workers through the MTA programme, or similar initiatives in other plants.

Clay says quality is the clearest benchmark for assessing whether the investment in education was worthwhile – a difficult calculation to make.

"There has been a dramatic shift in the quality curve. Some of that is design and engineering, but a big piece of quality comes from what a person does every day," he says.

The company has tried to stimulate interest in quality

to have solved most each year receive \$15,000.

Yet despite the plaudits won by the effort at Austin, the future of such initiatives is made less certain by IBM's corporate restructuring efforts. Given the strong pressures to reduce costs – IBM is planning to reduce costs and expenses by \$4bn a year, beginning in 1993 – and its efforts to cut staff, training investments will inevitably come under scrutiny.

Paul Osterman, professor of human resources and management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, says companies such as IBM which have pursued "full employment" policies have had a strong motive to invest in skills. Because they have not been able to hire and fire at will, they have been forced to think carefully about how to use employees.

Osterman says the future of investments like the MTA programme is vital if US industry is to move towards an industrial model based on workers allowing job flexibility in return for job security and investments in training.

The alternative is that more manufacturing plants may end up moving from Texas towards the pool of cheaper labour south of the Mexican border.

The author is a Harkness Fellow of the Commonwealth Fund, New York. This is the last in a series of articles on US education and training. Previous articles appeared on August 17 and 24 and September 23.



B. ROMLEY

## Some tender memories of the Bundesbank

David Waller continues the series on power lunching



Helmut Schmid melbusch, chief executive of the Metallgesellschaft mining, metals and engineering group, is exceptional

among senior Frankfurt businessmen in that he enjoys going out for a business lunch.

His chauffeur drives him to his favourite Italian restaurant 10 minutes from the centre of the town, while his bodyguards wait outside. Schmid melbusch commands a corner of the room, orders the food and launches into a lively discussion of his plans for the company, and much else besides.

Schmid melbusch's willingness to go out to lunch perhaps dates back to early in his career when – already marked out for great things – he spent some time working in New York with a Wall Street investment bank and became used to more relaxed eating habits than are the norm in Germany.

Top businessmen's diaries are booked up years in advance and they simply do not have the time, or the inclination, to go out. As Helmut Hartmann, chief press spokesman for the Deutsche Bank, Germany's biggest bank, explains, the bank's main board directors tend to have a bowl of soup and sandwiches at their desks as they get on with their work.

Of course, main board directors – the Gods of the German financial world – have the facilities to entertain honoured guests. Sal Oppenheim, the private bank, is reputed to have the most exquisite cuisine of all the banks in Frankfurt: unfortunately this correspondent cannot pass judgement on the quality of the food there, having not (yet) received an invitation.

He can, however, vouch for the tenderness of the wild boar occasionally served at the Bundesbank.

One step down from board level, bankers must eat canteen food, palatable and cheap, but canteen food all the same. The most senior have their own dining rooms but, again, get canteen food.

Despite all this there is a lively restaurant scene in Frankfurt. Eating out is mainly the preserve of the large community of intermediaries – brokers, lawyers, advertising executives and public relations people – and it is done predominantly when foreigners come to town.

It is a strange fact that, but for one or two notable French and German restaurants, the bulk of restaurants in this city are Italian. The proprietor of the local pizzeria suggests that there are 560 outlets for Italian food in the city of Frankfurt alone, and many more in dormitory towns such as Kronberg, Königstein and Bad Homburg.

Of these, a dozen or more are excellent restaurants where one can eat exquisite

### Menu

Sea bream with basil and vinegar sauce

Noodles with truffles

Zackenbarsch (perch) cooked in a salt crust

Mille foglie alla vaniglia

food at what – by the standards of other world financial centres – is a reasonable price. Many of these are clustered in the Westend, the elegant residential and office district five minutes away from the financial centre. The restaurants are informal, one can take off one's jacket and sit outside when the sun is shining.

Michele Castagno has run Florian, one of the most popular Italian restaurants of this class, for the last 13 years.

He says that up to half his customers at any given lunchtime are non-Germans. Most do not appear to have met their lunch partners before, and Castagno notices a perceptible relaxing of tension as the meal proceeds, the wine begins to take effect, and client and customer begin to feel at ease with one another.

**A**t lunchtime, 60-80 per cent of Castagno's customers eat fish. There is a choice of 60 wines, although most of the customers drink no more than one or two glasses, with many drinking nothing but water.

A typical light meal would consist of mushrooms or carpaccio (raw meat) followed by veal, fish or a mixed pasta dish, rounded off with fruit salad and a cup of coffee.

The menu (above) is on a grander scale, but it would not finish off either wallet or stomach: four fine courses would cost no more than DM100 (£40) per person (without wine) and you ought to be able to stroll round the corner afterwards to have a meeting at 3pm without needing a siesta.

However excellent and varied, Italian food can begin to pall if one is obliged to eat out two or three times a week. There are one or two good French restaurants (Eric's Bistro, for example, near the Palmengarten) and Humperdinck earns its Michelin Star for its fine "international" and French food.

Serious business is not discussed over lunch, at least not in public. It is, however, an important topic when top businessmen get together for drinks parties in the evening.

It is probably harder to get an invitation to one of these parties, than to be invited to lunch at Sal Oppenheim.

### EUROPEAN PARTNERS WORK TOGETHER ON THE AIRBUS PROGRAMME.

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Architecture/Colin Amery

## Arcadian dreams

The idea of arcadia has interested me for a long time. "Arcadia" means a place of rustic happiness that relies upon nature for its inspiration, but is itself man made. In his *Georgics*, Virgil understood the need for man to be inspired by the seasons, by the moods of nature and by bucolic pleasures that are not easily at hand in cities. Ancient Romans who went to their villas wanted to be close to nature, both to observe it and to control it. Life in the villa was often highly sophisticated, and part of this sophistication was the affection of simple rustic values and the acceptance of the country as a place of innocence and the home of "truth".

In England, the development of arcadian ideas is inextricably tied up with the growth of the culture of the country house and so it is entirely appropriate that The National Trust should arrange a travelling exhibition entitled *An English Arcadia*. This display of drawings and water colours concerned with the design of gardens, landscapes and garden buildings comes mainly from the Trust's collections, selected by Gervase Jackson-Stops, the Architectural Adviser to the Trust.

The purpose behind the exhibition is to raise funds for the Stowe Landscape Appeal to restore the landscape and garden buildings of this major example of English landscape history, which the Trust acquired in 1988. The exhibition has already toured the US and is currently in London at Harriet Goodwin and Fox, Bury.



The Temple of Concord and Victory, Stowe by John Claude Nattes

National Trust as the perfect example of a Dutch-inspired water garden. Westbury was in the hands of a property speculator in the 1980's and was very nearly lost for ever. Today it represents a triumph of restoration that has been much helped by the existence of the contemporary views and the account books that show the botanical nature of the planting. Westbury is small and perfect. It is still improving, and its history demonstrates the vulnerability of gardens: they can so easily completely disappear.

The small but perfect vision of a garden is intriguingly typified by the drawings by Sir James Thornhill (1675-1724), sketches for a *croquis à l'œil* garden. He proposed a series of

painted views to go on the walls of a house in London's Bloomsbury Square. This is the imaginative vision of a personal arcadia that would remain imaginary because it would add an illusion of space to a small town garden. Modern designers please copy. The drawings were found at the National Trust's property at Erddig in North Wales.

Plans of great 18th century parks and landscapes are an important element of this exhibition and they certainly deserve a lot of study. Initially they just look like trees and grass in plan, but in the catalogues there is often an accompanying legend that helps you to visualise the full extent of the changes planned to the English landscape.

Stowe is well represented here by the work of the French artist Jacques Rigaud, who was invited to England by the landscape designer responsible for Stowe, Charles Bridgeman. John Claude Nattes is another artist who left behind hundreds of views of Stowe that will be of enormous value in the restoration of the landscape and temples. His views have great charm even if they lack great artistic merit.

There is often more charm than art in many representations of landscape and garden buildings. It is important to remember that, although the inspiration for much of the English arcadian vision came from artists like Claude, Poussin and Watteau, it was often created by gentlemen amateurs

and their gardeners.

There is so much of delight and interest in this exhibition. Humphry Repton, Edwin Lutyens, William Burges – they are all represented. If the particular strengths of the collected drawings lies in the 18th century, that is because the arcadian spirit was then at its height and had not yet been swamped by Romanticism or plantmanship.

The National Trust has a responsibility for a quite remarkable slice of artistic and creative history – this exhibition shows how much of the richness of the vision survives on paper. Much still exists to delight us on the ground, but we must never forget how vulnerable this created landscape actually is.

Sponsorship/Anthony Thorncroft

## Crossing frontiers

The arts are certainly not afraid of Maastricht and an integrated Europe. The first major pan-European arts sponsorship honeypot has just been announced, with the money coming from Canadian owned Northern Telecom. For the first year there will be three tranches of £50,000 available for arts events in the UK, France and Germany which involve co-operation across frontiers.

For example, if a British dance group commissions a work by a German choreographer with a French composer providing the score, it could apply for a grant towards the project, ranging from £5,000 up to £50,000, with some confidence. Each year Northern Telecom will add a new European country to its patronage so that in three years time it should be distributing £250,000.

It also hopes that its sister companies on the continent will join the scheme, boosting the jackpot.

The sponsorship was devised by Cerc, the European Committee for Business, Arts and Culture. The applications will be shifted by local committees of worthies and then there will be an annual award ceremony. The chosen arts events will promote innovation as well as international collaboration and further information can be obtained from Spero Communications on 071 538 9946.

\* It is definitely getting hard out there. Companies are cutting back all their peripheral expenses. And it is companies that were previously big supporters of the arts – the banks, the insurance companies, the oil multinationals – that are among the main sufferers in the recession.

The consensus is to freeze sponsorship budgets where possible. But if the government cuts the arts budget for 1993-94 business will feel it is off the hook. This is an argument being put to the Treasury to maintain current spending subsidy levels.

Few companies have so far risked the opprobrium of withdrawing from existing sponsorships, but they are loath to enter new commitments and are cutting back in such areas as corporate membership, which can cost over £20,000 a year to guarantee seats at prestigious venues like Covent Garden. The pressure is on to justify arts expenditure and to avoid links which look like perks for the directors.

Sadier's Wells has adopted a flexible response to the crisis. It has come up with a scheme to suit the times. For £1,000 you can become a member of the Business Circle. As well as perks like free tickets and programmes the participants are invited to bimonthly Business to Business meetings at the theatre. The programme is aimed at appeal to local accountants, estate agents, etc, who relish the chance to make business contacts in an arty environment.

\* One major sponsor which has rationalised its programme is BP. Out goes its support of the Arts Journalist of the Year Awards, which for six years were held in co-operation with the Arts Council. The Council is now looking for a new backer prepared to put up around £50,000 to promote the highest possible standards in arts media coverage.

After a shaky start sponsors

have come to the aid of the Council's "Odd Couple" conference at Brighton on October 27-29. The conference aims to bring together workers in the arts and broadcasting to discuss areas of conflict and co-operation, but the cost of over £300 a delegate deterred many potential participants.

Philip Hedley of the Theatre Royal Stratford East expressed his horror at the expense by offering to put up the money for a young artist to attend. Harvey Goldsmith added his bursary. Now Carlton Communications is funding 70 full and half fee bursaries for impulsive enthusiasts and Granada, Central and Sony are also helping.

The ENO is allowing itself a pat on the back for finding sponsors for all seven of its new opera productions in the 1992-93 season while its rival at Covent Garden has no commercial sponsors lined up. Not that all is hunky dory at the Coliseum. It might have found sponsors for 14 of the operas on the programme but the revenue from this source is five per cent down on a year ago. Sponsors are cutting back on the size of their pledges.

ENO set itself an ambitious sponsorship target of £1.865m for 1992-93, an 18 per cent increase on the previous year. To date it has raised £1.4m and is now finding the going tough. Two corporate prospects withdrew their interest in Ken Russell's forthcoming production of *Princess Ida*, although an American couple, Christine and Irvine Laidlaw, are making good much of the gap.

Four operas this season are down to private sponsors and a fifth is backed by thousands of individuals. To pay for a new production of Janáček's *The Adventures of Mr Brouček* £20,000 has been raised in the past month from the ENO's audience, who are encouraged after every performance to contribute to its cost. A further encouragement is that BE Supply, UK distributors of Gambrinus Pilsen Czech Beer, is testing arts sponsorship by supplying several thousand bottles of beer to all the Sponsor an Opera campaign. By the end of October the ENO hopes that £100,000 will have been accumulated this way.

\* Sculpture is an art form that has failed to attract the sponsors its history and importance merits. Now the Royal Society of British Sculptors is sharpening up its act and has attracted a major backer. Nat West Life, the newly formed life assurance subsidiary of the Bank, is supporting the Natwest Life Commission, which is aimed at young sculptors at art schools.

The winning entry will stand outside the company's new Bristol headquarters. There will be £5,000 cash prize for the successful sculptor, £2,000 for their college, and advice from a professional sculptor in the erection of the work.

\* Alternative comedy is currently the popular sponsorship fix.

Rownree's is the latest company to join in, with its Polo Mint comedy award. Twenty-one nominees are appearing at London venues over the next two months. One will then be chosen as the winner and will carry off no money, just prestige. Polo has to pay their modest appearance fees, which includes spots on Kiss FM.

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## INTERNATIONAL ARTS GUIDE



Peter Coleman-Wright and Arwel Huw Morgan

sung with unusual boldness and determination. Helen Field (Anna) and Linda McLeod (Mozart) both have appealing voices but at times unwieldy. Mozart's Zerlina, spunkily gullible and tender, is more adorable than ever, opposite the strong new Masetto of Christopher Purves.

Most interestingly of all, the two female aristocrats are embodied and

skating round them lends an edge of excitement to everything they sing. In repertory at the Coliseum until

Wednesday 5

**SÉNÉCHAL, Michèle Langrange and Jules Bastin (also Oct 7, 9, 12, 15, 17, 20, 22, 25, 28). Sat:** Dutch National Ballet gives first of 15 performances of Peter Wright's production of *Sleeping Beauty* (8255 455).

### BERLIN OPERA/BALLET

Deutsche Oper Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos conducts tonight's performance of Hugo de Ana's new production of *Don Carlo*, with Giacomo Aragall in the title role (also Wed). Tomorrow: Christopher Bruce's ballet *Cruel Garden*. Thurs: Don Giovanni with Ferruccio Furlanetto in the title role. Sat: *Aida* with Julia Varady (3410 249).

**STAATSBALLETTER UND DEN LINSEN**

Pablo Luisi conducts the Berlin Staatskapelle in orchestral concert on Wed and Thurs featuring Bruckner's Second Symphony. Sat: Nureyev production of *Sleeping Beauty*. Sun: Die Fledermaus. Oct 15, 17, 21, 23; Rene Jacobs conducts Graun's Cleopatra e Cesare. Oct 19: Yuri Temirkanov conducts St Petersburg Philharmonic. Oct 25: Daniel Barenboim conducts first night of Harry Kupfer's new production of *Parsifal* (2004 762).

### CONCERTS

Schauspielhaus Hartmut Haenchen conducts tonight's concert by the CPE Bach Chamber Orchestra, including Beethoven's Second Piano Concerto (Peter Rösel). Thurs: Scottish Chamber Orchestra plays works by Mendelssohn, Maxwell Davies and Giuliani. Thurs: Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory Orchestra. Sat and Sun: Pinchas Steinberg conducts

Holst's *The Planets*. Oct 17, 18, 19: Hermann Prey sings German Lieder (2080 2156) *Philharmonie On Fri*, the Cellists of the Berlin Philharmonic give a concert celebrating their 20th anniversary. Oct 14, 16, 18: Claudio Abbado conducts semi-staged performances of *Il viaggio a Reims* (2548 8232).

**THEATRE** A new production of King Lear directed by Frank Castorf opens at the Volksbühne on Thurs (2828 976). Peter Ustinov will give a one-man show at the Schiller Theater on Oct 13 (3128 505). Schlosspark Theater's repertory includes a new production of Dürrenmatt's *The Visit* directed by Alfred Kirchner (7891 515).

### MILAN

**TEATRO ALLA SCALA** 20.00 Alfred Brendel plays Beethoven piano sonatas. Sun: Stanislav Bunin piano recital. Oct 12-22: Cristoforo Colombo, ballet choreographed by Alberto Mendoza, music by Donizetti. Oct 19: Cecilia Bartoli song recital. Oct 25: Cecilia Bartoli song recital. Oct 27-31: Nureyev production of Nutcracker (7200 3744).

### NEW YORK

**OPERA** Metropolitan Opera Madama Butterfly tonight and Fri. Falstaff tomorrow and Sat afternoon, Un ballo in maschera on Wed and Sat evening, and Les Contes d'Hoffmann with Domingo on Thurs. The world premiere of Philip Glass's *The Voyage* takes

place next Mon. (382 6000) State Theater has City Opera productions of Carmen on Wed and Sat, Die Zauberflöte on Sun and afternoon and Blitzstein's 1949 Broadway opera *Regina* on Fri (870 5570). The Giese/Wilson music theater piece *Einstein on the Beach* can be seen at Brooklyn Academy of Music from Nov 19 to 23 (718-5362 4100).

**CONCERTS** Avery Fisher Hall Kurt Masur conducts the New York Philharmonic tonight at 18.45 in Kodaly's Harry Janos suite and the Gershaw orchestra of Musorgsky's Pictures from an Exhibition. Thurs, Fri morning, Sat and next Tues: Erich Leinsdorf conducts an all-Stravinsky programme. Sun afternoon: James Galway recital. Oct 15, 16, 17, 20: Garrick Ohlsson plays Grieg's Piano Concerto. Oct 22, 23, 24, 27: Masur conducts Beethoven. Oct 28: Roger Norrington conducts Orchestra of St Luke's (875 5030) Carnegie Hall Giuseppe Sinopoli conducts the Philharmonia Orchestra on Sat evening and Sun afternoon. The first programme is all-Tchaikovsky, with Itzhak Perlman soloist in the Violin Concerto, and the second is devoted to Mozart and Mahler. Sun evening: Anne Sophie Mutter recital. Next Mon: Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos conducts National Orchestra of Spain. Oct 17, 18: Charles Dutoit conducts the Montreal Symphony Orchestra. Oct 19, 21: Muti conducts the Orchestra of La Scala (247 7800).

**DANCE** Elisa King and Dancers return to St Clement's Church with two programmes from Wed to Sat this week and next (423 West 46th St, 924 0077).

### VIENNA OPERA

Staatsoper Marcello Viotti conducts tonight's performance of *L'elisir d'amore*, with Roberto Alagna and Rolando Panerai. Tomorrow and Sun: Maria Stuarda with Balsca and Zampieri. Wed: *La fille mal gardée*. Thurs: *La bohème*. Fri: Der Rosenkavalier with Gwyneth Jones. Sat: *Tosca*. Oct 14:

Christoph von Dohnányi conducts first night of Adolf Döres's new production of *Das Rheingold*. Oct 20 and 24: Jose Carreras sings Alfredo in *La traviata* (51444 2960).

**CONCERTS** Musikverein Tonight's concert by the flautists of the Vienna Philharmonic features works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Debussy and others. Tomorrow: Claudio Scimone conducts I Solisti Veneti. Thurs, Fri, Sat and Sun evening: Jukka-Pekka Saraste conducts Vienna Symphony Orchestra, with Radu Lupu soloist in Beethoven's First Piano Concerto. Sun morning: Nikolaus Harnoncourt conducts Mozart. Next Tues: Alfred Brendel piano recital. Oct 17 and 18: Andre Previn conducts Vienna Philharmonic. Oct 28: Frans Brüggen conducts Orchestra of the 18th Century (505 8190).

**DANCE** Konzerthaus Salé et Lee Shic

### ZURICH OPERA

Opernhaus Montserrat Caballé has cancelled her performances in Semiramide (tomorrow, Thurs and Sat) and the title role will now be sung by Maria Dragoni. Wed: Der Rosenkavalier. Fri: Il Pirata with Mara Zampieri. Sun: Die Zauberflöte. Georges Prêtre conducts an orchestral concert on Sun morning and next Mon evening (282 0909).

**CONCERTS** On Wed at the Tonhalle, Janos Furst conducts the Tonhalle Orchestra in works by Dvorak and Tchaikovsky. Sun: Alfred Brendel plays Beethoven. (261 1600).

**THEATRE** The Schauspielhaus repertory includes Peter Wood's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Thomas Bernhard's play *Before Retirement* (265 5858).

### European Cable and Satellite Business TV

(all times CET)

#### MONDAY TO FRIDAY

**CNN** 2000-2020, 2020-2030 World Business Today – a joint FT/CNN production with Grant Parry and Colin Chapman.

**Super Channel** 0630-0900 (Mon) FT East Europe from FT TV

2130-2200 (Tue) Media Europe – what's new in European media business

2130-2200 (Wed) FT Business Week – global business report with Jean-Bernard Lévy

0830-0900 (Thurs) Media Europe

2130-2200 (Thurs) FT Eastern Europe Report

0830-0900 (Fri) FT Business Weekly

**SATURDAY** CNN 0600-0830 World Business This Week – a joint FT/CNN production 1800-1830 World Business This Week

**SUPER CHANNEL** 1930-2000 FT Eastern Europe Report

**SUNDAY** CNN 0600-0830 World Business This Week

**Super Channel** 1800-1830 FT Business Weekly

**Sky News** 0130-02

## FINANCIAL TIMES

Number One Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL  
Tel: 071-873 3000 Telex: 922186 Fax: 071-407 5700

Monday October 5 1992

## Appreciating the yen

**THE TIDES** from Europe's recent currency turmoil are washing up against Japanese shores. But the Bank of Japan would be well advised to keep its sights firmly on Japan's own economic problems. With the economy still weakening, a further cut in the discount rate is already overdue on domestic grounds. But any calls for the Bank of Japan to halt, rather than merely smooth, the appreciation of the yen should be resisted.

The rise in the value of the yen against both the dollar and the D-Mark over the past few weeks is understandably unwelcome for Japanese companies. Yet the rise is not merely a short-term spin-off from Europe's difficulties, but a necessary part of the adjustment process after the excesses of the last few years.

Over-investment in domestic capacity has left Japan with a distorted domestic economy and a high and rising current account surplus. Only through a higher yen can Japan produce the capital outflow needed to balance this current account surplus and encourage Japan's consumers to buy more imports.

There is little that policy can, or should, do to ease the corporate sector's pain. What it can do is encourage other sources of activity, other than investment or exports, to promote growth and soak up labour. That is why the recent Y10,700bn fiscal package of infrastructure spending was so timely. That is also why the supplementary budget needed to allow this spending should be enacted as fast as possible.

Still, the current problems of the corporate sector are not the only, or the most serious, threat to Japanese economic prospects.

## Brooke's Opera

"A VISIT backstage in the Royal Opera House is like stepping back into the 19th century. The glamour of the Victorian style enjoyed by the audiences is transformed into congestion, dust and over-loaded facilities behind the scenes." So wrote the Priestley report in its financial scrutiny of the ROH, published in 1984. Priestley recommended better financial management, better planning and the furtherance of a long-term development plan.

Almost a decade later, not much has changed. The Opera House is still in deficit - to the tune of about £3m: the redevelopment plan remains a will-o'-the-wisp; and it is unclear to anyone what will happen next, not least whether the government will come to the rescue.

Last week the ROH released summaries of two reports on its future. One was by the accountants Price Waterhouse and recommended - yet again - better management. The other was commissioned by the Arts Council and undertaken by Baroness Warnock. The most striking fact in what is known of her report is that she recommended that the development plan in its most ambitious form should be abandoned.

The Opera House has reacted in characteristic fashion by accepting the need for greater efficiency, yet sticking to the development form.

## Gatt this week

**THE US** and the EC are threatening a trade war. The Gatt system for managing trade according to internationally accepted rules is precariously poised. The time available to settle deepening conflict is dangerously short. More specifically, if there is no significant breakthrough in farm trade reforms during meetings on October 10 and 11 between US and EC officials, trade will be seriously compromised.

Some trade negotiators may not recognise how dangerous a stage negotiations have reached. EC negotiators may have taken encouragement from the fact that last Thursday's noon deadline set by Washington for a settlement of the EC-US oilseeds dispute passed without the immediate imposition of trade sanctions. If they believe that they have called the US bluff and won, they are wrong.

Thursday's noon deadline was less to do with oilseed sanctions than with the US serving notice that is at the end of its tether with the Gatt dispute settlement system, and is poised to abandon it.

Gatt has twice upheld US complaints over the EC's oilseed subsidy regime. The Community's attempt to settle the dispute by offering general compensation may satisfy Gatt obligations, but it fails to deal with the US domestic pressure for compensation specifically to target oilseed farmers.

The US view is that the Gatt dispute settlement process has been exhausted by the EC's refusal to meet Thursday's deadline to bow to binding arbitration

**M**r Felipe González, Spain's ever youthful prime minister, has the intense, concentrated air these days of a man who has just stepped back from a precipice after peering over the edge and contemplating the destruction of everything he holds dear.

As he prepares to mark the 10th anniversary of his Socialist government later this month, the prime minister is fighting a desperate battle to re-establish economic confidence in the face of the crisis in the European Community. At home, he has to contend with a currency still under pressure and with financial markets in a state of shock following the 5 per cent devaluation of the peseta within the European Monetary System three weeks ago and the Spanish central bank's reintroduction of capital controls. And in Europe, he is struggling to preserve Spain's position at the heart of the Community, the foundation stone of the country's efforts to modernise its economy and consolidate democracy since it joined the EC in 1986.

Mr González knows in his heart that the two battles are inextricably linked. For unless he and his trusted finance minister, Mr Carlos Solchaga, can restore the battered credibility of their domestic economic policies, the peseta will remain vulnerable. And so long as the peseta is under pressure, doubts will grow about Spanish policy.

Will Spain be able to meet the exacting standards required for full participation in the move towards European economic and monetary union? Will it be consigned to the slow lane of a two-speed Europe? Or will it, along with Italy and Britain, simply be blown out of the European mainstream by the markets, with all the debilitating uncertainties which that implies?

Spain, of course, is not Italy. Its economy is much smaller, and its budget deficit and debts are nowhere near as large. Spain also has the advantage that it does not of a stable, single-party government under a charismatic leader who, while his party continues to slide in the polls, still commands strong personal support.

There is just one more problem. A general election is due by October 1992, and the campaign has already begun. Mr González must fight for re-election at a time of slower economic growth than at any time since the mid-1980s, with the highest unemployment rate (17-plus per cent) of any EMS member, and with painful constraints on the public

sector which, it hopes, will be met by a mixture of private and public money. The sum mentioned is sometimes as high as £250m.

This is a profoundly unsatisfactory situation, likely to lead to nothing but the prolongation of uncertainty. The time has come, therefore, for someone to take the lead at the highest level. That can only mean the central government. There is now a new national heritage secretary in Mr Peter Brooke. He has the opportunity to devote his first few weeks in office to sorting out the mess.

Mr Brooke should say that the government will repair the deficit, but that the grandiose development plan should be ditched. He should insist that good intentions about better management and budgeting are put into practice, offer to put up some of the money - perhaps £15m - for the internal modernisation of the house as recommended by Lady Warnock and tell the ROH to go ahead as soon as practicable.

It is sometimes said that even internal redevelopment will take more than a year. Sceptics should remember one of the lessons of the Falklands war. In an emergency, it turned out to take about a tenth of the time to refurbish a ship that it did in normal circumstances. That is the sort of approach that might have to be changed

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## The British-built Nissan that costs \$5,000 less in Japan

Kevin Done traces the price-cutting journey of a Nissan Primera

A JAPANESE car made in Sunderland and shipped 10,600 miles to Japan costs £2,840 (\$5,000) less in Tokyo than a similar model for sale a few hundred yards from the plant in the north-east of England.

The car buyer in Sunderland wanting a new Nissan Primera eGT, built at the £300m car plant near the city, could drive it away from the dealer, Reg Vandy, for £11,215. (That price includes a 11.7 per cent discount.)

The racy-looking hatchback is black (a colour option that costs £120) and has air conditioning (a £75 option) to bring it up to the same equipment level as the car on sale in Tokyo. The car has front and rear spoilers, and the buyer has managed to force an 11.7 per cent discount out of the salesman.

In Tokyo a similar Nissan Primera eGT is on sale in the Kudan showroom of the Nissan Prince Tokyo Sales Company. Sunderland's is the only Nissan plant in the world which makes this model. The Tokyo price is Y2,788,875 (£13,375), £2,840 less



Primera: Made in Britain but cheaper by far in Japan

than in the UK. Before sterling's steep decline after its withdrawal from the European exchange rate mechanism the Tokyo price was equivalent to only £11,994.

The car's equipment levels - a

favourite justification for divergent car prices around the world - does not explain the difference. The Sunderland buyer gets an electric sun roof (not available in Japan) but the Tokyo buyer

gets automatic transmission, a £750 option in the UK. This would have raised the price of the Sunderland-bought Primera eGT even more if it had been available.

Last week a study by Ludvigsen Associates, the UK-based automotive analyst, claimed that European car buyers were paying as much as 30 per cent more for new cars than consumers in the US and Japan.

Ludvigsen said inefficiencies in the European motor industry

were one of the basic reasons for this difference.

Nissan, which pioneered Japanese car production in Europe with its UK plant, says there are "many factors" behind the price differences but "the most important is the overall pricing in the particular market".

"New car prices in Japan are relatively low because during the years of consistent growth in demand manufacturers have been able to offset increased costs against rising production volumes. Prices have consistently risen at less than the rate of inflation. Japanese inflation has been between 2 and 3 per cent for a number of years."

"By contrast the market leaders in the UK, which are also not necessarily the price leaders, have in many years raised prices by more than the rate of inflation. This has inevitably caused the general pricing level in the two markets to widen."

Additional reporting by Robert Thomson in Tokyo and Chris Tingle in Sunderland.

## Spain asks EC leaders to focus on unity

By Peter Bruce and Andrew Gowers in Madrid

SPAIN has called on European Community leaders meeting at next week's summit in Birmingham, UK, to focus on restoring EC political unity rather than become bogged down in debate over the exchange rate mechanism.

In an interview with the Financial Times, Prime Minister Felipe González warned: "Birmingham will have to give a clear signal that the 12 members, beyond what our individual problems might be, have common interests and are prepared to say so - I was going to say in a friendly way, but even that is not necessary."

Madrid is extremely concerned that political and technical divisions between Germany and Britain, which has the EC presidency until the end of the year, might spill over into the summit.

It is also worried that currency speculators might view anything less than a firm renewal of EC political commitment to the economic and political objectives of the Maastricht treaty as a further opportunity to attack the ERM's weaker currencies.

"If there has to be a discussion on the current situation of the monetary system, it will have to be sufficiently prepared and mature enough to reflect a united posture," Mr González said. "Anything else would transmit a bad message and we have had enough of those already."

Sources in Madrid said London has already suggested to leaders that finance ministers do not attend the summit for fear their presence will dilute the political focus of the meeting.

Nevertheless, the EC's monetary committee, which administers the ERM, would discuss ways to reform or strengthen the currency grid before the Birmingham summit.

The Spanish leader said he did not believe Britain's presidency of the EC during the currency turmoil had been deficient. "There has been a lack of co-ordination... perhaps a lack of leadership but we leaders are, all of us, responsible for it. We have made the mistake of re-nationalising our political attitudes when it is clearer than ever that interdependence has increased."

Spain may be forced to raise its official interest rate from 13 per cent this week to match demand for higher yields on the public debt it needs to issue in order to raise about \$17bn in new deficit financing by the end of the year.

Madrid considers interest rate rise, Page 2  
Testing of Spanish mettle: Felipe González interview, Page 14  
Bonds, Page 20



Getting it right on the mike: President George Bush makes adjustments before giving a speech in Orlando, Florida. Test for Bush veto powers, Page 2; Risk of a triple dip, Page 32

## Mozambique's leaders agree to end 16 years of civil war

By Halg Simonian in Milan

PRESIDENT Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique and Mr Afonso Dhlakama, the leader of the rebel Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo) movement, yesterday signed a treaty ending the country's 16-year civil war, which has crippled its economy and left over 1m people dead.

The treaty, signed at the Italian Foreign Ministry in Rome, marks the end of the last big conflict in southern Africa, which began shortly after Mozambique's independence from Portugal in 1975.

The two sides agreed to a ceasefire, which should come into force as soon as the treaty is

approved by the Mozambique parliament later this week.

Under the terms of the deal, weapons will be handed over to the United Nations and all armed groups are to be disbanded within six months. A restructured armed force is to be created, made up of around 30,000 fighters taken equally from both sides.

The Mozambique army and rebel forces must assemble at pre-determined locations around the country within a month of the treaty being ratified. To encourage fighters to participate, UN soldiers supervising the ceasefire will hand out food supplies at the assembly points.

## Japanese recovery plan

Continued from page 1

rowing at the height of the recession proved difficult to reduce once the economy had recovered because of political opposition to cuts in public spending.

Within the broader financing debate, Mr Tsutomu Hata, a

finance minister, is coming under pressure to consider plans for an income tax cut financed by higher consumption taxes.

Although the Ministry of Finance would favour higher indirect taxes, it recognises such a move would be extremely unpopular.

Big aid donors to Mozambique will meet for a conference within a month, while Zimbabwean soldiers guarding two strips of territory between their landlocked country and Mozambique's ports will have to leave in the same period.

At a formal ceremony at the Rome ministry, Mr Chissano heralded the beginning of a "new era" for Mozambique. After signing the agreement in the presence of guests including Mr P. Botha, South Africa's foreign minister, and President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, he and Mr Dhlakama shook hands.

Mr Chissano said general and presidential elections would take place in Mozambique and called on UN representatives to help supervise the peace and electoral process. The deal ends negotiations which began in July 1990 and reached agreement on limited ceasefire six months later.

Since then, further rounds of talks have, with periodic interruptions and walk-outs, brought further accords on electoral and military issues, culminating in a first direct meeting between the two leaders in Rome in August.

## THE LEX COLUMN

### Margin of error

#### Stores

FT-A Stores P/E ratio divided by the FT-A 500-Share P/E ratio

1.75  
1.50  
1.25  
1.00  
0.75  
1985 86 87 88 89 90 91 92

Source: Datastream

have made over \$1bn on the foreign exchanges recently. But there are reasons for optimism. Employment in small businesses is rising. So is capital spending. There is just the hint that companies are substituting technology for labour and that the US may eventually experience that rare event, an investment-led recovery.

can also afford to spend to achieve it, but Japan seems locked in a similar spiral to other countries coming to terms with debt deflation. The outlook for corporate earnings is bleak and the fundamental problems of the banks are far from resolved. It is instructive to note that the Nikkei is more than three per cent lower than it was when the fiscal package was announced.

#### UK retailing

So much for a consumer-led recovery. After the devaluation, British retailers appear a gloomy bunch. Several stores groups, including Kingfisher and Sears, see sales bumping along the bottom, with little prospect of an upturn. Devaluation is more of a burden than a benefit, as price increases in imported goods will be difficult to pass on to consumers in a depressed market. Margins, already under pressure, are likely to be squeezed further. Even the more buoyant August sales figures were largely autumn purchases brought forward as the soggy summer fizzled out.

To combat this, retailers are still focusing on productivity. Electronic systems allowing tighter stock control and more flexible staff working patterns have been introduced by companies such as WH Smith and Boots the Chemist. More intensive use is being made of shop floor space. But measures such as cutting support staff will only give a one-off boost to earnings growth. And many of the gains from electronic stock control have already been exploited.

Admittedly, the gloom is not evenly spread. Lower interest rates may help the consumer durables and DIY sectors even in the absence of housing market recovery. These businesses are dependent on better-off homeowners whose spending is affected by mortgage payments. They were the first stores into recession and could be the first out. By contrast, jewellery and fashion retailing appeal to a younger market, which only felt recession as unemployment rose. They will take longer to recover.

In any event, an '80s-style consumer boom is simply not feasible, as any rush of imports would have to be met quickly with higher interest rates. That limits the capacity of stores to lead the way out of recession. The large quoted groups such as Marks and Spencer, Kingfisher, Smiths, Boots and GUS are solid performers. But the sector does not offer the best way to invest for recovery.

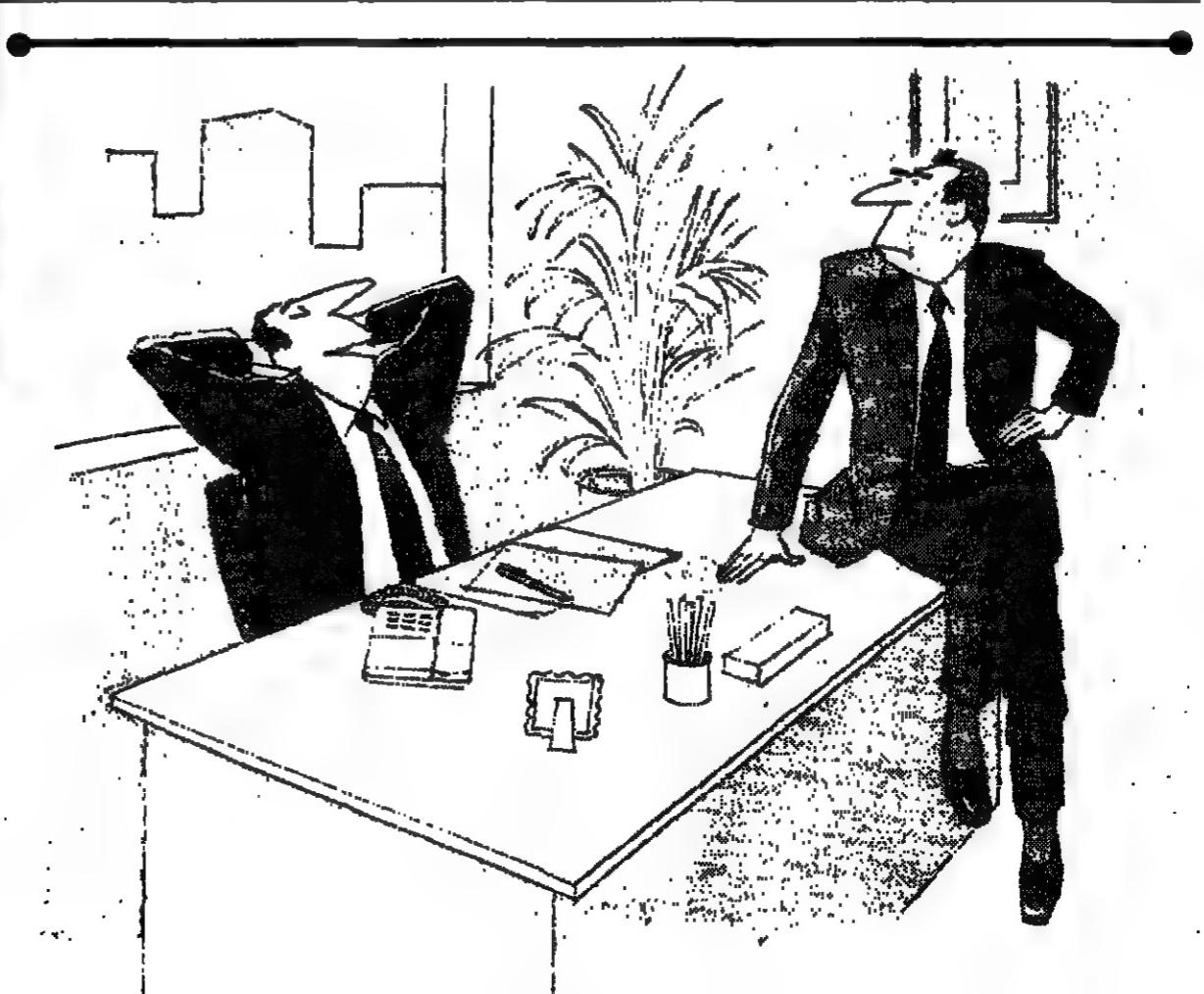
#### Wall Street

Friday's US employment report may have shown enough strength to convince the Federal Reserve to delay an interest rate cut. But given the continuing deceleration of the US economy, that delay is unlikely to last much beyond tomorrow's meeting of the Fed's open market committee. Even if the equity market may be supported by a rate cut, it has yet to come to terms with the possibility of Mr Bill Clinton winning the election. The recent sell-off in healthcare stocks was some indication of the likely knee-jerk reaction of the markets to a Democratic victory.

Third-quarter earnings figures due in the next few weeks may also be disappointing, with the notable exception of banks, which are thought to

give the economy a new lease of life either. Consumer confidence, already jolted by the collapse in the property market, is being further undermined as manufacturing incomes fall in response to cuts in overtime.

Another rate cut might thus be perceived as a sign of weakness, rather than a signal to buy equities. The government may actually want growth. It



**"Naturally I'm pleased that we stand at a premium to the sector, but I do sometimes rather wonder why."**

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World Weather	°C	°F	Frankfurt	°C	°F	Majorca	°C	°F	Oronto	°C	°F	Tanende	°C	°F		
Boulogne	8	46	Geneva	17	63	Malaga	23	73	Coto	16	64	Tokyo	26	79		
Brests	8	46	Budapest	17	63	Malta	27	81	Paris	11	52	Toronto	27	81		
Azores	R	16	64	Gibraltar	21	70	Malta	27	81	Prague	15	59	Tunis	24	79	
Aldwys	T	15	Buenos Aires	17	63	Melbourne	14	57	Reykjavik	20	68	Venezuela	21	70		
Amsterdam	S	15	59	Glasgow	13	56	Melbourne	14	57	Rio de Janeiro	32	90	Venice	15	59	
Athens	F	25	77	Cape Town	27	81	Milan	14	57	Rome	23	73	Warsaw	12	54	
Bahrain	S	32	90	Hong Kong	31	88	Montreal	14	57	Salzburg	-	-	Washington	14	57	
Bangkok	R	25	77	Chicago	32	90	Montreal	14	57	St Francisco	13	55	Zurich	14	57	
Barcelona	C	16	64	Colombia	15	59	Montreal	14	57	St Francisco	12	54	Washington	14	57	
Beijing	S	17	63	Dubai	25	77	Montreal	14	57	Stockholm	20	68	Zurich	14	57	
Berlin	S	27	81	Dublin	F	14	57	Montreal	14	57	Stockholm	12	54	Washington	14	57
Bilbao	-	-	Dublin	F	14	57	Montreal	14	57	Stockholm	12	54	Washington	14	57	
Bonny	S	14	57	Dubrovnik	S	15	61	Montreal	14	57	Stockholm	12	54	Washington	14	57
Bordeaux	S	32	90	Edinburgh	S	13	55	New York	17	63	Toronto	17	63	Washington	14	57
Bordeaux	C	16	61	Faro	S	23	73	New York	17	63	Toronto	17	63	Washington</		

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**COMPANIES & MARKETS**

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**INSIDE**

**U-turn leaves new German force intact**

When in March this year Germany's federal cartel authorities ruled that Allianz should scale down its 22.3 per cent stake in Dresdner Bank, the move was seen as an attack at the very heart of the German financial and industrial establishment. Last week, there was a dramatic U-turn, and this leaves the Allianz/Dresdner axis intact as a powerful new force in German banking and insurance. Page 10

**Quebecor in European move**

Quebecor, North America's second biggest commercial printer, says it is negotiating to buy three printing plants in France, including one formerly owned by Maxwell Communication. Mr Pierre Peladeau, Quebecor chairman whose holding company includes Canada's second largest circulation daily newspaper, said the plants would form a base for a big foray into European printing. Page 18

**Gilt fees general malaise**

Gilt investors are feeling the full effects of the general malaise over the direction of UK economic policy. Last week long-dated gilts dropped 13 points as worries piled up about how Britain intends to cope with the loss of its central economic plank in the shape of membership of the European exchange rate mechanism. Page 20

**US dollar returns to favour**

The US dollar surged back to centre stage in the international bond market as Europe's currency markets cracked under the pressure of the ERM. After the steady decline of the Euro-dollar bond — it accounted for more than half of all borrowing in 1989, but had shrunk to only 31 per cent by last year — the renaissance has been startling. Page 21

**Brierley extends offer**

Brierley Investments Limited, the New Zealand investment company which has made a hostile bid for Gibbs Mew of the UK, has extended its offer for the brewer until October 9. Page 18

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Nearly three weeks on from Black Wednesday, the UK is still without any semblance of an economic policy.

Indeed ever since sterling was forced to quit the European exchange rate mechanism, official comments have generated heat rather than shed light. The past week's war of words between the UK Treasury and the Bundesbank has left Britain almost as much in the dark about the future underpinnings of policy as when the 23-month-long experiment of pegging sterling to the D-Mark failed.

We do, it is true, know something about the government's intentions. A few days after sterling's float, Mr Norman Lamont, the chancellor, told fellow finance ministers in Washington that policy setting would give weight to a range of financial indicators. These would include narrow money, with the current 0 to 4 per cent growth target remaining in place, as well as broad money, asset prices (with particular reference to house prices) and the exchange rate.

The prime goal will be still to bear down on inflation. Some senior Treasury officials appear to think that an "inflation target" might be helpful in this regard.

But there has been no attempt so far to explain how these policies would work. Mr Lamont's address to the Conservative Party Conference this week will be honed to help his political survival. He may give some policy details to the Commons' Treasury and Civil Service committee next Monday. But the Treasury's assumption after the float was that the chancellor's October 29 Mansion House speech would be the occasion to expand on monetary policy.

Fiscal policy, or at least the public spending part of it, should be made clearer with publication of the Autumn Statement, probably in mid-November.

Sterling's sharp fall last

## Trafalgar to change accounting policy

By Roland Rudd

TRAFALGAR HOUSE, the UK property, construction and engineering group under siege from Hongkong Land, is expected to change its accounting policies following an investigation by the Financial Reporting Review Panel, the new UK accounting standards watchdog.

The outcome of the panel's investigation, which started in February, is also likely to have a significant effect on Trafalgar's results for the financial year to September 30, 1992.

The move centres on £102.7m (\$183m) worth of development properties Trafalgar reclassified in 1981 as fixed assets, resulting in a £68m writedown of wholly-owned properties and a £34.7m writedown of asso-

ciates. If the writedowns had been deducted from the profit and loss account, as the panel is understood to have argued, they would have reduced last year's £122.4m pre-tax profits.

Sir Eric Parker, Trafalgar's chief executive, said: "The group's accounts were the responsibility of the board which have acted with the very best advice from our financial advisers. The accounts were unqualified by our auditor, Touche Ross."

He added: "There are different views within the accounting profession as to how deal with things."

Trafalgar said the panel was already looking at the accounts of another 200 companies and dismissed the incident as having little effect in its fight to prevent Hongkong Land, which has already

acquired 14.99 per cent of the group, from taking another 15 per cent by tender this week.

However the panel, which is expected to make an announcement today, says it is investigating the accounts of fewer than 20 companies.

Trafalgar is understood to have accepted the ruling of the panel — to transfer the development properties back into current assets — to avoid going to the High Court, which could have compelled the group to revise its accounts.

Trafalgar will give details of the expected amendments to its accounting practices and policies in a circular to be sent to institutional shareholders tomorrow.

Sir Eric, who was yesterday working on the final details of the circular with senior

directors at Trafalgar's London headquarters, said he would try to reassure shareholders that the panel's ruling would not have any effect on the value of Trafalgar's businesses.

Shareholders' funds at the year-end are expected to remain unchanged at £704.5m.

However this year's pre-tax profits are expected to be further denting by new writedowns.

The board still intends to pay a final dividend although it is expected to be severely cut from last year's 9.5p.

Trafalgar said Kleinwort Benson, one of its financial advisers, is now marketing the hotels, which include the Ritz and the Stafford are which are valued by Trafalgar at £130m, to around 30 potential buyers. Observer, Page 15

Andrew Bolger hears the very grim message coming from British boardrooms

## Companies stuck on the rocky road to recovery

STEELING's devaluation and the consequent stock market rally have tended to obscure the grim message emerging from Britain's boardrooms: UK companies have just endured a very bleak summer.

Managers, who had seen their hopes for a rapid post-election recovery fizzled out by June, said trading continued to be tough in the third quarter of the year. Although devaluation and lower interest rates do hold out the prospect of some longer-term relief, the impact is unlikely to feed through for some time.

Imperial Chemical Industries told Hoare Govett, one of its brokers, that demand was slow in July and very weak in August. Anecdotal evidence from September suggested little improvement. Hoare Govett duly downgraded its forecast of the chemicals and pharmaceutical group's third-quarter pre-tax profits to £100m (£17.6m) compared with £158m for the same period last year. Mr Martin Evans, chemicals analyst at the broker, said there was limited room for improvement and downgraded ICI's full-year profits for 1993 from 278m to 220m because of poor demand.

Stockbrokers last week cut forecasts of next year's profits from Hanson, the UK conglomerate, after meeting the company.

Just before sterling's devaluation, Courtaulds Textiles, the UK's second biggest textiles and clothing manufacturer, issued a stark warning on prospects for recovery, saying that "there are no signs of improvement in trading conditions".

Mr Martin Taylor, chief executive of Courtaulds Textiles, said his main concern had been the pressures his company would face next year, had the pound continued to trade near the \$2 level. He said: "There really was the most enormous squeeze looming over the hill. Obviously we are very relieved that prospect has been removed."

Retailers have also had a difficult time, with the short-lived boost in sales immediately after the election rapidly being overtaken by a plunge in consumer confidence as the unemployment outlook continued to darken over the summer months.

Britain's unemployment total rose in August to a five-year high of 2.8m. The increase in the month — at more than 47,000 — was much higher than expected.

The seasonally adjusted increase was the 28th consecutive monthly rise and the largest in one month since January. Manufacturing output was flat in July month-on-month and showed no growth in the three months to the end of July.

Kingfisher, one of the UK's biggest retailing groups, said: "A good month has been followed by a bad one. Some of our markets have looked stronger only to fade away again. It is a tough world out there for retailers and it is not going to get any easier."

Mr Geoff Mulcahy, Kingfisher's chairman and chief executive, added: "If your house price has fallen, you are afraid of losing your job, and you have high levels of personal debt you are bloody well not going to go out

and spend money no matter where interest rates are."

Sales of new cars in August rose by only 1.7 per cent compared with the same month last year, dashing hopes that this year would mark the end to the three-year decline in demand for new vehicles.

Ford UK and Rolls-Royce Motors Cars have announced a total of 2,500 redundancies, following other big reductions announced by Jaguar, Aston Martin and Group Lotus.

The chain reaction caused by reductions in orders from big companies was blamed for the 53 per cent increase in business failures in the third quarter of the year. Sales of new cars in August rose by only 1.7 per cent compared with the same month last year, dashing hopes that this year would mark the end to the three-year decline in demand for new vehicles.

Ford UK and Rolls-Royce Motors Cars have announced a total of 2,500 redundancies, following other big reductions announced by Jaguar, Aston Martin and Group Lotus.

The government, having sunk all its eggs in the ERM basket, and having failed to live up to its promise to defend successfully the pound's parity, is left asking the nation to take its ability to manage the economy on trust. Britain's recent history is reason enough not to do so.

The government, having

proceeded from all planned privatisations, excluding those where the receipts are destined to reduce the debts of heavily-borrowed state holding companies selling their subsidiaries. Proceeds from the disposals of Credito Italiano, the bank controlled by the IRI state holding company, and Nuovo Pignone, the engineering group owned by the public-sector Enel energy and chemicals concern, would not be put into the new fund.

Receipts would be used to shore up the balance sheets of IRI and Enel.

The fund will also receive cash from future dividend payments by IRI, Enel, and Ena, the four public sector concerns recently transformed into joint stock companies.

Bankers are keen to know what bonds would be withdrawn via the new fund,

and whether paper would be bought at market or nominal prices. Italy issues a wide range of debt, varying from fixed-rate three-month treasury bills to 10-year bonds and shorter-maturity floating-rate issues. Current market rates are often well below nominal prices.

his house had persistently highlighted the inevitability of sterling devaluation, but had still been caught out by the speed and manner in which it came about.

He said: "The effect of early devaluation has already been to offset downgrades that were already in train."

Devaluation caused Mr Brown to increase his forecast of industrial profits from 10 to 14 per cent next year, following a 4 per cent average rise this year. He has left his dividend growth number unchanged at 2 per cent for this year and 6 per cent next year.

In spite of all these downgrades, most analysts continued to take an over-optimistic view of companies' likely performance. Even if companies will not see much benefit from a lower pound and interest rates before next year, devaluation has certainly come to the rescue of analysts, who would have otherwise had to continue downgrading.

Mr Mark Brown, market strategist for UBS Phillips & Drew, said

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Some optimists see similarities with the early 1980s when sterling fell sharply, interest rates declined and inflation moved downwards — albeit unevenly — until the middle of the decade. This parallel cannot be taken too far, however. Sterling was less obviously overvalued before Black Wednesday than in the early 1980s.

If the chancellor would be unwilling to let policy drift for too long, what, credibly, can he do?

The government, having sunk all its eggs in the ERM basket, and having failed to live up to its promise to defend successfully the pound's parity, is left asking the nation to take its ability to manage the economy on trust. Britain's recent history is reason enough not to do so.

It is likely that the government will seek to target at least some of the financial indicators identified by Mr Lamont. But some senior policy makers have already concluded that to make that move credible, there will have to be a more open discussion of policy options so that they can be debated and tested by government insiders and outsiders.

Such a development, for example, would mean that the UK could never again go into the ERM at a central rate of DM2.545 in London. After a week of trading insults between London and Frankfurt, it closed on Friday for a loss of 11.5 pence.

As a result, the next move in interest rates could be up rather than down.

At one time, the Treasury had a rule of thumb that equated a 10 per cent devaluation to a 2.5 percentage point base rate cut. This is now formally disowned in Great George Street. But the easing

of monetary conditions implicit in the latest devaluation is substantial as is the inflationary potential of the weaker pound.

In a gloomy assessment of sterling's fall, the National Institute of Economic and Social Research has calculated that a 10 per cent sterling devaluation will add 3.8 percentage points to retail price inflation in 1993, 3.7 points in 1994, 2 points in 1995 and 1.1 points in 1996.

With next Friday's announcement of the retail price index expected to show that UK inflation in September was running at an annual 3.5 per cent, the NIESR's calculations would suggest that Britain is again on the threshold of rising prices.

Such a development, for example, would mean that the UK could never again go into the ERM at a central rate of DM2.545 without causing significant damage to the economy.

In a nation as obsessively secretive as Britain any move that made economic policy making more open and accountable would be a significant advance. It would be the one good thing to emerge from what otherwise has been a catastrophic failure of government.

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## COMPANIES AND FINANCE

# German insurance competition hots up

David Waller reports on the battle for market share ahead of deregulation in 1994

**W**hen in March this year Germany's federal cartel authorities ruled that Allianz should scale down its 22.3 per cent stake in Dresdner Bank, the move was seen as an attack at the very heart of the German financial and industrial establishment.

Last week, the Bundeskartellamt backed down, saying there was no need for Allianz - Europe's largest insurance group - to sell a single share in Dresdner, the second biggest bank in Germany.

It was a dramatic U-turn, and it leaves the Allianz/Dresdner axis intact as a powerful new force in German banking and insurance, its influence consolidated through a network of shareholdings in large industrial companies.

As the Berlin-based cartel authorities explicitly recognised in reversing their earlier judgment, competition in the German insurance market, the largest in Europe with premium income of DM168bn (£87.2bn) last year - is intensifying ahead of deregulation. A series of European Community Directives, aimed at freeing up insurance markets, must be adopted by member states by 1994.

Two large, financially strong companies have moved aggressively into the German market in the last six months. One is Assurances Générales de France (AGF), which has

recently fought and won a complex battle to have full voting rights accorded to its 25 per cent stake in Aachen und Münchener Betreuung, Germany's second largest insurance group.

The other is the Deutsche Bank, Germany's biggest bank and rival to Allianz as Germany's most powerful industrial-financial complex.

In July it bought a 30 per cent stake in Gerling-Konzern Versicherungs-Beteiligungen, the biggest privately-owned insurance company in Germany, with premium income of DM10bn. It followed this last month with the purchase of a majority holding in Deutscher Herold Versicherungen, another privately owned group.

The bank has said it will respect the wishes of the vendors and not disclose any financial details. Speculation suggests that the bank paid between DM10m and DM15m for the Gerling stake, and around DM50m for control of Herold.

**M**r Georg Krupp, the Deutsche main board director responsible for the bank's insurance activities, said that most of the press reports about the prices paid had been wide of the mark - but declined to give any clue as to the actual figure.

AGF's motivation for closer co-operation with Aachen is clear - it wants to establish a bridgehead into the German



Georg Krupp: keeping bank's customers happy

market. From the point of view of the German bank, Mr Kilian Kopper, the Deutsche Bank chief executive, explained last month that the Herold deal was a means of diversifying its private client business. The 30 per cent stake in Gerling - predominantly an industrial insurer - was a "financial participation", not an excursion into mainstream insurance.

Despite these innocuous explanations, the German press has been alive with stories about an impending battle of the giants between Deutsche on the one hand and Allianz/Dresdner on the other, a battle complicated by the fact that Deutsche and Allianz both own 10 per cent stakes of each other.

By contrast, the purchase of

From his vantage towards the top of one of the Deutsche Bank twin towers in the heart of Frankfurt's financial district, Mr Krupp dismisses talk of a "battle of the giants". "It has never been our aim to build up an insurance group," he says, "and it will not be in the future either. Our goal is not to set ourselves up as a competitor to Allianz, but to serve our retail customers better."

Mr Krupp says that Deutsche Bank has long realised that in order to keep its 4.5m retail banking customers happy, it must offer more than straightforward banking products. And in order to market its expanded product palette more effectively, it must do more than operate its network of 1,500 bank branches; it must open up new channels of distribution.

The first step in this strategy was to open up a housing finance subsidiary, followed by the founding of a life insurance business in 1988. Mr Krupp says that the recent acquisitions - especially the Herold purchase - have enabled the strategy to be developed more quickly and cost-effectively than if the bank had relied on organic growth alone. Herold brings the bank a tranche of new life and other personal business, as well as access to new distribution channels via a network of itinerant salesmen.

There is no clarification on this from Deutsche: asked whether the bank has plans to buy the entire company Mr Krupp replies cryptically: "Fantasy knows no bounds." Closer co-operation cannot be ruled out, he says.

One fantasy which may yet become a reality is that of Allianz/Dresdner and Deutsche Bank battling it out in the liberalised insurance markets of the mid-to-late 1990s.

## Linx print group heads for market via placing

By Peggy Hollinger

**L**INX Printing Technologies, the Cambridge-based maker of inkjet printers, is to make its stock market debut on October 15.

Linx will be introduced through a placing by Morgan Grenfell and is expected to have a market value of about £20m. It is unlikely that the prospective price/earnings ratio will be any lower than that of its larger rival, Domino, at about 16 times.

After the placing the nine-member board will hold more than 50 per cent of the shares.

The company will publish a pathfinder prospectus tomorrow showing an 87 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £1.64m for the year to June 30. Sales were 62 per cent higher at £10.5m. Earnings per share of about 9.07p compare with 5.14p last time.

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## Brierley extends Gibbs Mew offer

By Peggy Hollinger

**B**RIERLEY Investments Limited, the New Zealand investment company which has made a hostile £11m bid for Gibbs Mew, has extended its offer for the Salisbury-based brewer until October 9.

That is the date of an extraordinary meeting for Gibbs shareholders to vote on the proposed purchase of

drinks distributor UK D.

Brierley said that if the £2.3m purchase was approved, it would drop its 200p bid for Gibbs.

In a document posted to Gibbs shareholders last week, BIL said the acquisition of UK D would be "a serious mistake which could seriously damage Gibbs Mew".

It urged shareholders "whether or not they wish to accept the BIL offer" to vote against the acquisition.

Brierley launched its bid for Gibbs, which is almost 60 per cent controlled by the Gibbs family, in August. The New Zealand company holds 19.7 per cent of Gibbs Mew.

Before the bid was launched, rumours had circulated in the market that Gibbs was planning an acquisition on the drinks side of its business. It has been suggested that a growing dispute between the Gibbs family and BIL over the acquisition led to the New Zealand company's offer.

However, the board and family members representing 55.5 per cent of Gibbs' shares have rejected the offer.

## Nathu Puri buys Conder Structures from receivers

By Peggy Hollinger

receivership, had sales of £40m in 1991. Mr Puri said he expected to retain between 50 and 150 jobs.

Mr Puri, who is contesting a high court action by members of two pension funds controlled by Melton Medes, said he was considering the option of not having a pension scheme for employees of Conder Structures.

The case against Melton Medes Pension Trustees and MM Fund Management, the fund's trustees, is expected to come to court next month. It was launched by the Graphical Paper and Media Union in an attempt to obtain information about the investment of scheme assets and in an effort to appoint a judicial or independent trustee.

Conder Group was placed into administrative receivership last month following the announcement of £22.6m in pre-tax losses for 1992. The company is believed to have suffered £31m in losses on two contracts last year, from which it never recovered.

Conder Structures, which employed 337 people before the

receivership, had sales of £40m in 1991. Mr Puri said he expected to retain between 50 and 150 jobs.

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The company now operates 57 plants in North America, including Mexico. Printing accounts for half the group's annual sales of around £83.6m.

• Inco is meeting union officials at its Sudbury and Thompson nickel mines and processing plants today to announce cost-cutting moves to offset declining metal prices.

The unions say Inco will cut the work week from five to four days, but insisted they offered alternatives. Extended Christmas shutdowns are also possible.

He added that there had been an upturn in demand for temporary office workers and that margins were slowly moving back towards previous levels - Reed last made a profit in the first half of 1990-91.

Mr Reed said: "We are still trading at a loss and expect to do so for some time yet."

Concern at the mounting losses prompted the chairman and executives to take pay cuts of up to 42 per cent earlier this year.

**Ash & Lacy margins under pressure**

Pressure on margins pushed pre-tax profit of Ash & Lacy, the West Midlands-based galvanising and metal pressings group, down 14 per cent in the six months ended July from £2.31m to £1.97m on increased turnover of £28.72m (£27.83m).

Mr David Fletcher, chairman, said that despite the continuing effect of the recession, cash flow remained good and the balance sheet healthy. With strong presence in each of its major markets, the company remains well positioned.

Earnings fell to 5.09p (6.04p). The interim dividend was maintained at 2.5p.

CROSS BORDER M&A DEALS

The value of their acquisitions plummeted," Mr Patterson said.

The recent announcement that Reed International and Elsevier, the Dutch international publishers intended to merge, was strong confirmation that a longer running trend towards greater international integration in the publishing industry was continuing.

In the four and a half years to June 1992 the UK was the top purchaser in the industry by a wide margin with 145 deals worth a total of \$6.958bn.

More than half of that was, however, accounted for by 22 deals done by the late Mr Robert Maxwell.

The UK was also the second largest seller of publishing companies with 39 deals worth a total of \$1.76bn. But Britain was a long way behind the US which had 156 deals worth \$13.6bn.

The companies which won the takeover battles were often the ones that lost out in the long run, now they are burdened with debts and seeing

The week's international merger and acquisition activity saw the renewal of one major trend and the possible continuation of another, writes Brian Bollen.

The biggest deal of the week saw hostilities renewed in the international chocolate war. The offer by Kraft General Foods International, part of the Philip Morris Group of the US, for Freia Maribou of Norway, continues the consolidation and concentration of the industry over the past five years.

If it succeeds, the combination of Freia, Kraft and Jacobs Suchard, through which the offer is being made, will create Scandinavia's leading branded confectionery group. The deal needs government approval and could be blocked by the Hershey group which has an 18.6 per cent stake.

Elsewhere, the week had a distinctly oriental flavour. The biggest new UK development was the swoop by Hong Kong Land for up to 23.99 per cent of debt laden but asset rich property developer Trafalgar House.

The move could be described as another example of a Keswick-controlled British Hong Kong company preparing for 1997 by going home, an attempt to asset strip or a way to unlock shareholder value, depending on one's point of view.

Dutch electronics group Philips is preparing to manufacture lighting products in Japan for the first time, by taking a 70 per cent stake in Kondo Sylvania from GTE Sylvania of the US.

The week's developments in the international airline industry saw renewed efforts in the US to stop British Airways taking its planned stake in USAir, and Ireland's Guiness Peat Aviation creating a joint venture with Air Ukraine.

## Sun Hung Kai 40% ahead

By Simon Holberton  
in Hong Kong

**S**UN HUNG Kai Properties, one of Hong Kong's leading property developers which is controlled by the Kwok family, yesterday posted a 40 per cent increase in profits to HK\$4.68bn (£204.5m) in the year ended June 1992.

Profit was struck up 22 per cent increase in turnover to HK\$10.68bn from HK\$8.77bn in 1990-91.

A final dividend of 75 cents is due to be paid, making HK\$1.14 for the year - up 18.6 per cent on the previous year's total payout. There was also a cash bonus of 15 cents a share, it is understood, as a last time.

Mr Walter Kwok, the compa-

ny's chairman, said he envisaged satisfactory growth in the coming year and that dividends would increase accordingly.

Sun Hung Kai has one of the biggest land banks in Hong Kong. During the year it acquired 27 sites for development with an aggregate gross floor area of 4.5m sq ft. Its total land bank exceeds 37m sq ft.

This year marked a change in strategy. In July it raised HK\$6.3bn through a placement of shares to fund property investment in China.

The company added that the remaining 30 per cent of its business would be in Hong Kong, split 80/10 between property and non-property interests.

It said an independent assessor will adopt a selective approach and will concentrate on high quality real estate and related projects.

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Earnings were additionally burdened by special provisions to be paid, making HK\$0.5bn against net profits of HK\$0.5bn in the same period last year.

The plunge into the red stemmed from increased losses at Olivetti, the computers

a relatively mild winter. The figure was also boosted by the expansion of the group's growing water distribution activities, with 46 new concessions in the first half of this year.

• CIR, the industrial holding company controlled by Mr Carlo De Benedetti, reported a first-half group loss of HK\$1.8m against net profits of HK\$0.5bn in the same period last year.

The group controlled by CIR, which is widely held abroad, raised its first-half gross operating profit by 9.9 per cent to HK\$2.0bn (£195.3m). Earnings before depreciation and tax rose by 13.4 per cent to HK\$0.5bn, boosted by a 31 per cent jump in interest and other financial income.

Turnover rose by 5.7 per cent to HK\$2.61bn, thanks to higher sales of natural gas, in spite of

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Der Anspruch von heute:

## Weniger Worte, mehr Inhalt.

Viel geschrieben und wenig gesagt: passé. Man will schneller zum Kern der Dinge. Statt immer mehr Volumen - Reduktion auf das Wesentliche. Die Inhalte. Das gilt auch für eine Tageszeitung, die nicht nur aktuell, sondern anderen voraus sein will. **DIE WELT**  
Weil sich die Welt verändert, verändert sich die Welt.

Ab 15. Oktober neu

## INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL MARKETS

## UK GILTS

## Investors seek signs of new policy direction

GILT investors are feeling the full effects of the general malaise over the direction of UK economic policy. Last week long-dated gilts dropped 1% points as worries piled up about how Britain intends to cope with the loss of its central economic plank in the shape of membership of the European exchange rate mechanism.

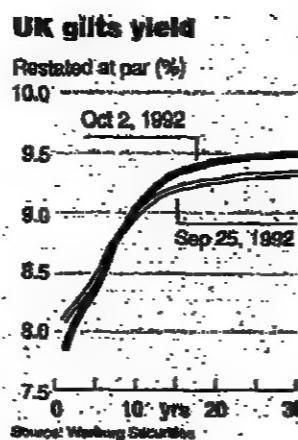
Much of the malaise in the market was connected with the pound's 11% pliening loss against the D-Mark during the week. On Friday night in London it was quoted at DM2.43, more than 50 pence below its former central rate of DM2.95 in the ERM from which it was suspended nearly three weeks ago.

In the immediate aftermath of the suspension, the gilt market strengthened, especially at the short end of the market on thoughts that the floating pound would permit a rapid

lowering in base rates, now 9 per cent. Such a move might help the limping economy move out of recession, and generally restore confidence in UK economic policies.

However, since Black Wednesday on September 16 the government's economic policy-making machine has been in a state of torpor. Senior ministers have had to worry about how to re-orient policy towards Europe, and have also become embroiled in a dramatic argument with the Bundesbank over who was to blame for sterling's ERM exit.

Mr Nigel Richardson, an economist at S.G. Warburg Securities, said many in financial markets were worried by lack of direction in UK government policies over the economy. "We are seeing a policy vacuum. No one has any clear idea about the Treasury's policies over interest rates and the



yield." Last week, while short-dated gilts remained steady, and even gained in price by a small amount at the very short end of the market, long-maturing bonds saw their yields rise. As well as the worries over policy, there is also a nagging suspicion among some

gilt market experts that inflationary pressures, which for some two years have been kept in check by the ERM discipline, may in the months ahead become re-ignited if interest rates come down too quickly.

The concerns pushed down the price of the long-maturing 9 per cent Treasury bond due in 2008 to 96% on Friday night, some 1% points less than a week previously. Its yield climbed consequently to 9.42 per cent from 9.21 per cent.

Mr Philip Tyson, a bond analyst at UBS Phillips and Drew, is looking for further rises in yields especially at the long end of the gilt curve in the next few months. The price falls for such classes of gilts could be expected to spill over to the 10-year benchmark stock, which generally had a good month in September as yields fell. The yield on a 10-

year UK government stock declined by 25 basis points (0.25 percentage points) during the month, while on a comparable basis yields on French, Japanese and US government securities fell by rather less - 21 basis points, 11 basis points and 9 basis points respectively.

During the month German government bonds performed best of all, yielding 50 basis points less at the end of September compared to the start. Much of this good performance in German bonds is related to the rise in the value of the D-Mark against most other European currencies, a development which is likely to continue in the next week or so after the decision by the Bundesbank council on Friday to leave credit rates unchanged, against expectations of an easing in monetary policy.

Peter Marsh

## EUROPEAN GOVERNMENT BONDS

## Spain suffers from volatile trading conditions

THE Spanish bond market is reeling. In little more than two weeks the pesetas have been devalued, effective exchange controls have been reintroduced and the Kingdom of Spain's foreign currency debt has been put under review for a possible downgrade.

Last month's five per cent devaluation brought the peseta into the ERM down from Pt265 to the D-Mark to Pt264, but the currency has stayed weak despite continued intervention by the Bank of Spain.

The devaluation took place on September 18; five days later the Bank of Spain forced institutions purchasing foreign currency against the peseta, or buying pesetas, to make a 12-month interest-free deposit equivalent to the transaction with the Bank. The Bank said the measures were necessary because of the "volatility, speculation and disorder" in the currency markets.

"A lot of confidence has been killed and there is a clear sentiment, lead by foreigners, to get out of Spain," said Mr Alvaro Villacero, chief of trading at James Capel's Madrid securities house.



The 10-year bond yield rose by nearly a full point to 13.50. That same week, trading began on a \$1.5bn issue that represented the Kingdom of Spain's first venture into the Euro-dollar bond market. The Kingdom was forced to increase the yield by 10 basis points to 55 over US Treasury bonds.

The effective reintroduction

of exchange controls was an ill-fated decision that was taken as the lesser of three evils. The Bank of Spain took it in preference to taking the peseta out of the ERM and raising interest rates.

In this environment the decision last week by Moody's

Investor Services to put Spain's AA2 credit rating under a review was characterised as "not very opportune" by Mr Solchaga and bluntly called "the final straw" by a broker in Madrid.

Investors were by this stage near panic and the Madrid stock market's general index tumbled to its lowest level for six years.

If the ERM, and the peseta within it, is saved through a realignment, or if some form of mechanism, such as the "multilateral fund" that Mr Solchaga is currently canvassing, is introduced to restore depleted national reserves (Spain's remain robust at \$9.6bn after spending a reported \$1.35bn last month to defend the peseta) and if there can be an ordered pan-European retreat from high interest rates lead by Germany, then what will the bond market be looking at in Spain?

The quick answer is the government's ability to implement a 1993 budget that it describes as the toughest in 20 years. The budget increases central government spending by only 3.7 per cent, a fall in real terms, and is likely to push up rates to climb.

Interbank rates rose last

week by 0.25 per cent to 15.5 per cent and an important auction of certificates of deposit, CDS's, today is expected to deliver higher rates.

In this environment the decision last week by Moody's

unemployment next year by 300,000 to beyond the three million level.

The market will increasingly scrutinise Spain. The Spanish treasury needs to raise a total of \$55bn before the end of the year, some \$17bn of it in new financing, in order to service the deficit.

Tom Burns

## US MONEY AND CREDIT

## Poor economic data leave markets in a quandary

A WEEK of consistently poor economic data but no reduction in interest rates left the US bond markets waiting and hoping. The statistical build-up was impressive. On Tuesday, there was the Commerce Department report, which showed that the index of leading economic indicators - supposed to gauge future industrial and commercial activity - fell 0.2 per cent in August.

The same day, the Conference Board unveiled its consumer confidence index for September. This too, showed a slump, with the number falling to 54.4 from a revised 55.0 in the previous month.

A couple of days later, the National Association of Purchasing Managers index for September rolled out at 49.0, having stood at 53.7 for August. When the index slips below 50.0, this suggests that activity in the manufacturing sector is declining - a scenario which was last posted in January.

To compound the gloom, spending on new construction during August was shown to have fallen by 0.8 per cent, after a 0.2 per cent rise in July. Finally, Friday brought the September unemployment figures - the bond market's primary focus all week.

The data could have been worse. Non-farm jobs fell by 57,000 during the month, substantially less than the 120,000 decline forecast by many econ-

omists, while the unemployment rate improved marginally - from 7.6 to 7.5 per cent.

However, after closer inspection, the numbers seemed less encouraging. While the effects of Hurricane Andrew and summer job programmes undoubtedly muddled the figures, analysts were quick to note an apparent continued decline in jobs in both the manufacturing and construction sectors. The consensus was simple: the employment market remains extremely weak.

Still, the Federal Reserve saw no further action on interest rates. On the contrary, the Fed conspicuously failed to inject reserves into the banking system during the traditional pre-noon intervention period on Friday - a move which was generally read as signalling caution.

So the US bond markets, which had rallied early in the week and then eased when the dollar came under pressure, were left in something of a quandary. The knee-jerk reaction was for bond prices to fall immediately after the unemployment numbers were announced. However, by Friday afternoon, when the numbers had been examined more closely, prices rose again. The benchmark 30-year long bond ended the week at 99, down just 4, where it yields 7.33 per cent. This was marginally below the previous week's close.

Nikki Tait

## AMERICAN RE IN LONDON

Subsequent to American Re-Insurance Company's purchase by a newly formed holding company, American Re Corporation, Edward B. Jobe, Chairman of American Re-Insurance Company, is pleased to confirm a continuing commitment to American Re clients in the United Kingdom through its existing office, American Re Representatives Ltd., which is currently situated in Beaufort House, 15 St. Botolph Street, London EC3A 7DT. For further information contact Timothy J.H. Fox, General Manager, on 071 220 8046 or 071 220 8047.

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ECU 150,000,000

Floating Rate Notes due 1995

In accordance with the provisions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that the Rate of Interest for the three month period ending 4th January, 1993 has been fixed at 12.775% per annum. The interest accruing for such three month period will be ECU 3,335.69 per ECU 100,000 Bearer Note, on 4th January, 1993, against presentation of Coupon No. 3.



London Branch  
Agent Bank

LEO 1 pic  
\$83,000,000 Class A1  
\$75,000,000 Class A2  
\$12,200,000 Class B

Mortgage backed floating rate notes due 2025

For the interest period 1 October 1992 to 1 January 1993 the Class A1 Notes will bear interest at 9.425% per annum.

Class A1 at 9.50% per annum

Class A2 at 9.75% per annum

Amount payable on 4 January 1993 will be as follows:

Class A1 at \$2,410.79

per \$97,500 note

Class A2 at \$2,537.67

per \$100,000 note

The Class 'B' notes will bear interest from 1 October 1992 to 1 January 1993 at 11.375% per annum.

Interest due and payable on 11 January 1993 will amount to \$355,729.45 per \$1,200,000 Principal Amount.

Agent: Morgan Guaranty

Trust Company

JPMorgan

MORTGAGE FUNDING  
CORPORATION NO 3 PIC  
\$120,000,000 Class C-1  
\$14,200,000 Class C-2

Mortgage backed floating rate notes October 2023

For the interest period 1 October 1992 to 1 January 1993 the Class C-1 Notes will bear interest at 9.425% per annum.

Interest payable on 4 January 1993 will amount to \$2,453.08 per \$100,000 note.

The Class C-2 Notes will bear interest at 9.625% per annum.

Interest payable on 4 January 1993 will amount to \$355,729.45 per \$1,200,000 Principal Amount.

Agent: Morgan Guaranty

Trust Company

JPMorgan

STRAIGHT BONDS Yield to redemption of the mid-rate. Amount issued is expressed in millions of currency units.

FLOATING RATE NOTES/US Dollars unless indicated. Margin above six-month offered rate for US dollars. C.cpn = current coupon.

CONVERTIBLE BONDS/US Dollars unless indicated. Premium = percentage premium of the current effective price of buying shares via the bond over the most recent share price.

WARRANTS/US Dollars unless indicated. Premium = premium over current share price. Bond warrant yield = exercise yield at current warrant price.

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Closing price on October 2

1992

## INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL MARKETS

## INTERNATIONAL BONDS

**Borrowers putting their faith in the US dollar**

THE US dollar surged back to centre stage in the international bond market in the third quarter of this year as Europe's currency markets wavered, then cracked under the pressure of the ERM.

Figures for the three months to the end of September show the huge reliance now being placed by borrowers on the US currency. Some \$31.2bn of Eurodollar bonds were issued, 56 per cent of the total amount raised on the international markets. After the steady decline of the Eurodollar bond – it accounted for more than half of all borrowing in 1988, but had shrunk to only 31 per cent by last year – the resurgence has been startling.

Against the background of low US interest rates, the use of the currency has been all the more notable. Hence the renewed interest in "collared" floating-rate notes, typically offering a minimum coupon of 5 per cent, of which more than \$6bn have been issued in recent weeks. However, interest in these bonds in the secondary market will evaporate quickly should US rates climb back above 5 per cent.

All the signs now point to further use of the dollar, along with the other traditional currencies for international borrowing – the D-Mark and the yen.

The Ecu, a putative international reserve currency earlier this year,

the dollar, D-Mark and yen in the months ahead, for three reasons.

First, they have yawning fiscal deficits to finance. Continuing recession in several European countries has depressed tax revenues and pushed up social security payments. Investors are only half persuaded by the recent efforts of countries like Spain and Italy to hold down their deficits, a fact which has helped to fracture ERM.

Second, the interest of international investors in the domestic bond markets of these countries has shrunk. That leaves countries with the prospect of borrowing more from domestic savers, thereby pushing up long-term interest rates, or borrowing in foreign currencies. Doing the latter could also help to persuade international investors of their will not to devalue, something from which Italy benefited as it announced new foreign currency borrowing plans last Thursday.

Third, a range of countries from Scandinavia to Italy, Spain, the UK and Ireland, have either seen their foreign currency reserves fall sharply as a result of intervention in the exchange markets, or face the prospect of repaying the Bundesbank in D-Marks for its own support of their currencies. Either way, the need to borrow in D-Marks has risen sharply.

The trouble is, the credit standing

of several of these countries has been declining sharply. Last week, Moody's Investors Service, the US rating agency, said it was considering downgrading both Spain and Sweden. Sweden, a top-rated name until the beginning of 1991, is currently classed AA1, while Spain is AA2. They could be set to follow Italy, which fell to AA3 this summer, perilously close to the single-A status which would push it outside the ranks of general acceptability in the investment world.

Demand for European currencies, including the D-Mark, accounts for Deutsche Bank's position as the most active bookrunner in the Euromarket in the first nine months of this year. It took the lead in 82 per cent of the \$204bn raised. Mr Roger Bates, of Deutsche Bank in London, says that demand for Eurobonds could be weak in the near future as investors concentrate on reducing their currency risks. That could raise the cost of borrowing in the international bond market still further, after a rise in yields which has already been noticeable in the past fortnight.

However, Mr Bates adds: "When things stabilise, [investors] will start to think of interest again" – leading to renewed interest in Eurobonds.

**Richard Waters**

Manager	TOP EUROSOUND BOOK RUNNERS		First nine months 1992		First nine months 1991			
	\$m	Rank	% Issues	\$m	Rank	% Issues		
Deutsche Bank	16.61	1	9.18	67	9.74	5	5.14	61
Nomura Int'l Group	14.62	2	7.20	68	17.04	1	9.40	98
Credit Suisse/CSFB	12.77	3	6.28	33	13.07	2	6.07	50
Merrill Lynch	10.51	4	5.17	44	7.91	8	4.16	23
Goldman Sachs	10.12	5	4.88	35	5.53	9	3.00	38
Paribas	10.04	6	4.84	39	10.47	3	5.28	28
US	9.09	7	4.47	53	6.85	11	3.62	28
Morgan Guaranty	8.37	8	4.12	30	5.97	14	3.16	31
Daiwa Securities	7.13	9	3.51	10	10.80	4	5.60	70
Nikko Securities	7.04	10	3.47	42	7.22	10	3.81	60
Yamazaki	6.30	11	3.10	63	6.85	7	4.67	62
IBJ	5.47	12	2.68	19	4.02	16	2.44	21
CCF	5.05	13	2.49	17	3.12	19	1.69	10
Shearson Lehman	4.36	14	2.44	25	1.42	31	0.73	9
Swiss Bank Corp.	4.15	15	2.10	24	6.41	12	3.36	26
Solomon Brothers	4.33	16	2.13	21	5.68	15	2.89	17
Morgan Stanley	3.88	17	1.88	20	0.05	8	4.73	15
Dresdner Bank	3.81	18	1.68	16	3.04	17	1.71	20
Credit Lyonnais	3.73	19	1.67	17	2.22	20	1.54	14
ABN-Amro Bank	1.07	20	1.51	19	0.65	30	0.34	3
<b>Inclusion totals</b>	<b>120.42</b>			<b>1022</b>	<b>190.16</b>			<b>1028</b>

1 Preliminary figures • Full credit to book runner

Source: IFR RESEARCH

has been stopped dead in its tracks. Nearly 15 per cent of all international bond issuance last year was undertaken in the Ecu. Over the last three months, due to the Danish vote on the Maastricht treaty in June, that proportion has failed to less than 1 per cent.

Other "fringe" European currencies, which had become popular as investors looked for ways to trade on the convergence of European

bond yields, have also lost their appeal. And the Canadian dollar – another popular currency, accounting for nearly 10 per cent of bonds issued last year – is unlikely to be won up again until there is a clear end to Canada's constitutional uncertainties.

Ironically, it is the European countries which have suffered most in the upheaval of the ERM that are likely to be the biggest borrowers in

the future, as the credit standing

is present to do so, and are capable of generating currency.

However, a timely and continued lending by the European Central Bank, which came when the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Fed, in the US, was not able to do so, has been a major factor in the success of the ERM.

The Ecu, a putative international reserve currency earlier this year,

was "not yet predicted" to be in GDP next year, and the next nine months are

## NEW INTERNATIONAL BOND ISSUES

Borrowers	Amount m.	Maturity	Avg. life years	Coupon %	Price	Book runner	Offer yield %
US DOLLARS							
GECI/cit	100	2003	10.25	(8)	100	K.Pearby/Paribas	-
Swiss-Suisse LBK/bm	150	2004	12	(7)	100	Merrill Lynch Int'l	-
Banco Económico/Cay/Ag	80	1994	2	11	99.58	Swiss Bank Corp.	11.252
Kingdom of Denmark	500	1997	8	5.5	99.34	CSFB	5.655
Republic of Argentina	250	1997	5	8.25	100.00	CSFB	8.256
JDC Corp./D	100	1996	4	(1)	100	Nikko Europe	-
JDC Corp./D	100	1997	5	(1)	100	Nikko Europe	-
Chiyoda Corp./D	270	1996	4	1.5	100	Nomura Int'l	-
Samsung E&C Co./D	40	1997	4	4.25	100	CSFB	-
Pohang Iron & Steel	300	1997	5	6.375	99.59	Goldman Sachs Int'l	8.449
STERLING							
NFC/H	92.5	2007	7.70	100	82W	-	-
AUSTRALIAN DOLLARS							
BNP/D	50	2002	9.79	9	99.2	Hambros Bank	9.117
D-MARKS							
Kemigumi Co./D	300	1998	4	4.125	100	Nomura Bk/Deutsch.	-
San Paolo (Lisbon)/D	150	1997	5	(8)	100	San Paolo (Port)	-
Credit Suisse/Deutschland	500	2002	10	0	101.51	CSFB/Effecbank	7.156
Republique d'Irlande	800	2002	19	7.75	102.25	Dresdner Bank	7.423
Montreal Urban Community	130	2002	10	8.125	102	Bayerische LB	7.829
Bayerische LB Int'l. Ltd.	300	1997	5	7.5	101	Bayerische LB	7.254
Grand Tamaoko/Deutsch.	20	1997	5	(8)	100	ASB (Deutsch.)	-
GUILLEROS							
Electricité de France	200	1998	8	7.875	100.7	ABN AMRO	7.885

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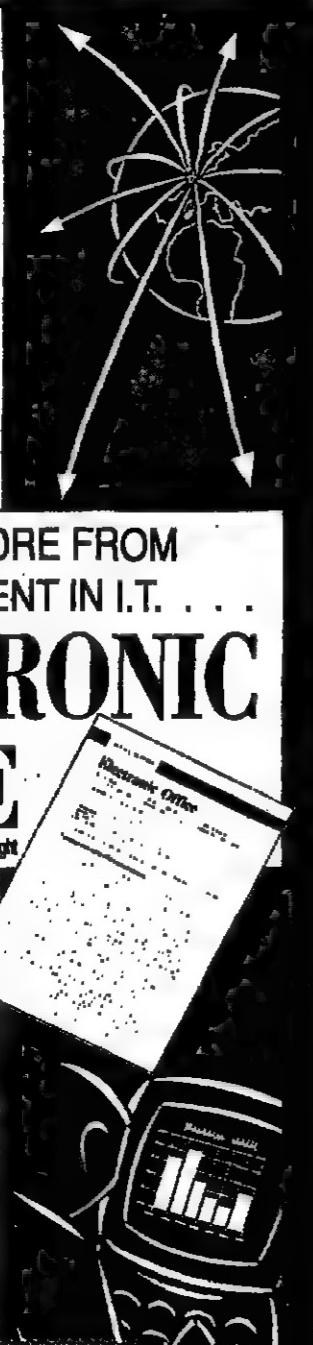
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FT SURVEYS

Prices for electricity determined for the purposes of the electricity pricing and trading in England and Wales  
in Electricity Price Control Period 1991-92 for Trading from 1st October 1991 to 31st March 1992  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 1992 to 31st March 1993  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 1993 to 31st March 1994  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 1994 to 31st March 1995  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 1995 to 31st March 1996  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 1996 to 31st March 1997  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 1997 to 31st March 1998  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 1998 to 31st March 1999  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 1999 to 31st March 2000  
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from 1st April 2001 to 31st March 2002  
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from 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009  
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and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022  
and for the period of the Settlement Agreement  
from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023<br





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**FT MANAGED FUNDS SERVICE**



## LONDON SHARE SERVICE

## AMERICANS

	Notes	Price	Div	Dividend	Last	City
Abbott Labs.	b	181.40	-1	1.00	107.150	U.S.
Walden & W.		50.00	-1	1.00	48.00	U.S.
American		51.00	-1	1.00	50.00	U.S.
Amer. Cyanam.		37.00	-1	1.00	36.00	U.S.
Amer. En.		15.00	-1	1.00	14.00	U.S.
Amer. Int'l.		24.20	-1	1.00	23.00	U.S.
American		40.00	-1	1.00	39.00	U.S.
Bank America		25.00	-1	1.00	23.00	U.S.
Banks NY.		35.00	-1	1.00	34.00	U.S.
Bell Atlantic		20.00	-1	1.00	19.00	U.S.
Bethlehem		30.00	-1	1.00	28.00	U.S.
Boehringer		6.50	-1	1.00	6.00	U.S.
CPC		110.00	-1	1.00	109.00	U.S.
East. Land Co.	b	27.00	-1	1.00	25.00	U.S.
California Gray		7.00	-1	1.00	6.00	U.S.
Chase Manhattan		12.50	-1	1.00	12.00	U.S.
Charles		12.00	-1	1.00	11.00	U.S.
Dow Corning		33.00	-1	1.00	32.00	U.S.
Exxon		20.00	-1	1.00	19.00	U.S.
FPL		20.00	-1	1.00	19.00	U.S.
Ford		24.00	-1	1.00	23.00	U.S.
Ford Motor		21.00	-1	1.00	20.00	U.S.
Gen Elec.		44.00	-1	1.00	42.00	U.S.
General West.		20.00	-1	1.00	19.00	U.S.
Globe Inds.		14.00	-1	1.00	13.00	U.S.
Zenith Inds.		20.00	-1	1.00	19.00	U.S.
Zenith Inds.		21.00	-1	1.00	20.00	U.S.
Zenith Inds.		17.00	-1	1.00	16.00	U.S.
Honeywell		27.00	-1	1.00	26.00	U.S.
Ingersoll-Rand		45.00	-1	1.00	44.00	U.S.
Lockheed		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Louis Vuitton		100.00	-1	1.00	98.00	U.S.
Merrill Lynch		25.00	-1	1.00	24.00	U.S.
Morgan J.P.M.		11.00	-1	1.00	10.00	U.S.
National Prod.		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
NYMEX		40.00	-1	1.00	39.00	U.S.
Pall		19.00	-1	1.00	18.00	U.S.
Penske		31.00	-1	1.00	30.00	U.S.
Qwest Corp.		14.00	-1	1.00	13.00	U.S.
Rockwell		24.00	-1	1.00	23.00	U.S.
Rex NY		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Sears, Roebuck		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Shawmutt Bank		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Son Co.		13.00	-1	1.00	12.00	U.S.
Tenneco		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Time Warner		12.00	-1	1.00	11.00	U.S.
Unisys		27.00	-1	1.00	26.00	U.S.
UPS Int'l.		14.00	-1	1.00	13.00	U.S.
Whitbread		15.00	-1	1.00	14.00	U.S.

## BUILDING MATERIALS - Cont.

	Notes	Price	Div	Dividend	Last	City
Site Supply		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Site Supply		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Site Supply		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Site Supply		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.

## BUSINESS SERVICES

	Notes	Price	Div	Dividend	Last	City
Business		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Business		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Business		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Business		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.

## CONTRACTING &amp; CONSTRUCTION - Cont.

	Notes	Price	Div	Dividend	Last	City
Contracting		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Contracting		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Contracting		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Contracting		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.

## ELECTRICALS

	Notes	Price	Div	Dividend	Last	City
Electrical		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Electrical		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Electrical		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Electrical		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.

## GENERAL

	Notes	Price	Div	Dividend	Last	City
General		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
General		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
General		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
General		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.

## HOTELS &amp; LEISURE - Cont.

	Notes	Price	Div	Dividend	Last	City
Hotels		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Hotels		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Hotels		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Hotels		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.

## INVESTMENT TRUSTS - Cont.

	Notes	Price	Div	Dividend	Last	City
Investment		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Investment		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Investment		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.
Investment		10.00	-1	1.00	9.00	U.S.



**NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE COMPOSITE PRICES**

*4 pm close October 2*



## MONDAY INTERVIEW

# The sure touch of a survivor

Sir Norman Fowler, the Conservative party chairman, talks to Philip Stephens

**S**ir Norman Fowler is one of the great survivors of Conservative politics. As others who sat around Mrs Margaret Thatcher's first cabinet table in 1979 squabble from the House of Lords over how an economic malaise shattered into mirage, Sir Norman is among those still trying to pick up the pieces.

Now Conservative party chairman, he left the cabinet in January 1990, telling Mrs Thatcher that after nearly 11 years he wanted to spend more time with his family. Mr John Major's move into Downing Street 10 months later persuaded him that he had time still for politics. By the end of this week he may be forgiven for having third thoughts.

When he moved into Smith Square last April Sir Norman saw his principal role as a peace-time chairman who would overhaul the creaking structures of a party which wins elections despite its campaigning skills, rather than because of them.

That remains a priority. Within the next few months he will announce the most fundamental reforms of his party's organisation for 40 years. It will weld together the disparate wings into a single board of directors and begin to whittle down a £10m overdraft.

But his energies this week in Brighton will be absorbed by the latest bloody episode in the Tory civil war over Europe. His job will be to rally the support of grass-roots activists for Mr Major over the Maastricht treaty; to persuade them that images of Mr Norman Lamont should be cast from their minds when they issue the traditional call for the return of capital punishment; and to ensure the now Lady Thatcher is silent.

Sir Norman, who has no department of his own but sits in on the cabinet's political discussions, is one of the pivotal figures in Mr Major's effort to regain a grip. Rooted in the same Tory centre-ground as the prime minister, his job is to offer the soothing reassurance which has made him a master in the art of lowering the political temperature.

The party's footsoldiers are feeling bewildered and betrayed. Six months ago they anticipated a celebration in Brighton of their fourth consecutive election victory. That hope was shattered in a few hours on September 16 when the City of London's young



## The centre of the party backs Major's stand'

almost all - took part and in which everyone was agreed that this was the way forward".

There is then a gentle warning to his colleagues as well to the Euro-sceptics: "I think opponents of this course should actually take note of that [agreement]. Because there are not going to be people going behind and saying, 'Well, actually it has nothing to do with me. We believe in something else.' That isn't

### PERSONAL FILE

1938 Born Chelmsford, Essex.

1961 Graduated, Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

1961-70 Journalist and home affairs editor, The Times.

1970-74 MP for Nottingham South.

1974- MP for Sutton Coldfield.

1979-81 Transport secretary.

1981-1987 Health and social services secretary.

1987-1990 Employment secretary.

1992- Chairman of the Conservative party.

going to happen."

Mr Michael Portillo, Mr Peter Lilley, Mr Michael Howard and Mr Lamont - the least enthusiastic Europeans in the cabinet - have been forewarned.

Sir Norman has persuaded Lady Thatcher that she should reserve her next onslaught on Maastricht for a more suitable occasion. He spoke at length to her 10 days ago and agreed that she should step on to the platform alongside Mr Major on Thursday morning just before Mr Lamont's speech.

The Lady is unpredictable, but Sir Norman seems confident enough that she will stick to a silent part: "I had a long talk with Margaret... She was in tremendously good form.

What she said was that she wanted things to happen as normally as they could. But the party conference will want to make a fuss of her and

rightly so."

But what about the economy? Constituency parties after all are crammed with small-business owners, who have been among the worst hit by the recession. For two years Mr Lamont told them the pain of the ERM would bring its rewards in stable prices and renewed growth. Neither are in sight, and the attempt to hold the exchange rate has been abandoned.

Sir Norman opens up the tap of reassurance: "I think what one says is what the truthful position is. It was the right decision to go into the ERM. But given the totally tumultuous circumstances that we faced at the time it was right to suspend our membership."

But surely the representatives (there are no delegates in the Tory party) will want to know whether the government still has an economic policy?

"What the chancellor I'm sure will be spelling out is that, whether we are in the ERM or not, what matters is the underlying policy of, for example, the control of inflation and the control of public spending."

Neither will be easy and this year's spending round is proving particularly rough: "Any government department has to act within the confines of what the nation can afford," says Sir Norman. The implication is that the Conservatives can no longer guarantee to meet the manifesto pledges they offered to the electorate only six months ago.

Sir Norman moves on for the remaining minutes to his other role, acknowledging in effect that Tory party finances are in as bad a state as the nation's:

"We have an overdraft of over £1bn. That is an absurd position for this party to be in."

Popular myth has it that the party is a gleaming, well-oiled machine, the Rolls Royce of British politics. In fact, local constituency parties - independent of Smith Square and

represented by a separate National Association - are frequently at war with Sir Norman's empire in London.

Many associations refuse to hand over any money to the central office, accusing Smith Square of waste and mismanagement.

A group of 50 constituents have demanded an emergency meeting of the umbrella Central Council to force through the "democratisation" of the party's organisation.

Yet it has become apparent

that something is amiss. Consumer spending ran ahead of

incomes and did not generate enough new employment to become self-sustaining.

By mid-year it was clear that the economy was growing at an annual rate of only about 1.5 per cent; consumer confidence, meanwhile, was again beginning to erode. With the outlook for exports also deteriorating because of depressed markets in Europe and Japan, business confidence began to wobble.

Instead of hiring, companies began firing, further undermining consumer confidence.

President George Bush hailed the marginal decline in unemployment last month as a sign that the economy was on the mend. He was grasping at straws. The jobless rate fell only because the labour force shrank faster than employment; it was not a sign of strength. Recent economic data, in fact, are quite alarming - the economy appears to be losing what little momentum it had during the summer. On Wall Street there is even talk of a "triple dip" recession.

This will irritate many optimists who deny that the economy ever suffered a second dip. Gross domestic product has grown every quarter (albeit very slightly) since the spring of last year when the contraction phase of the recession ended. But the economy most definitely dipped late last year; a host of indicators - including employment and industrial production - declined sharply, prompting the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates by a full point in an effort to revive confidence.

For a while, the stimulus appeared to work wonders: consumer spending surged in the first quarter of this year, prompting an increase in production and some rebuilding of corporate inventories.

The ever-sanguine US forecasting fraternity promptly assumed that the "recovery" was finally underway. The previous year's forecasts of 3 per cent growth were dusted off and issued as 1992 projections.

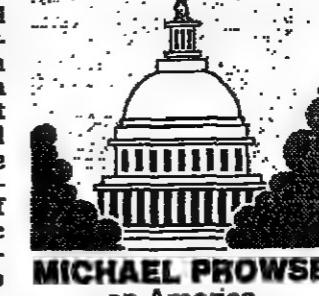
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MICHAEL PROWSE  
on America

The upshot is that the economy is now in almost as fragile a condition as this time last year. GDP appears to have grown in the third quarter, but at a declining rate. The employment figures released on Friday were a catalogue of woe for the second month running. Non-farm payroll employment declined 57,000 last month and figures for August were revised sharply down to show a decline of 128,000. After allowing for the distorting effects of the federal summer jobs programme, employment has registered an average monthly decline of about 19,000 for the past three months, marking a sharp break with the modest gains recorded in the first quarter of this year, prompting an increase in production and some rebuilding of corporate inventories.

The economic outlook is much worse than most forecasters - certainly the White House - ever envisaged. But it would be wrong to exaggerate the risks. If a triple dip materialises at all, it is likely to be similar to last year's mid-downturn - a stalling of growth in which some, but not all, sectors and regions slip temporarily into recession.

But even this degree of discomfort may be avoided if the Fed opts to cut interest rates again after next week's meeting of governors and regional presidents. The betting on Wall Street is that interest rates will be reduced, despite the risks of turbulence in foreign exchange markets and the proximity of a presidential election. At the margin this will help revive confidence, although it is hard to see the current level of rates as a binding constraint on economic growth. The odds that a new president will authorise a fiscal stimulus next spring have also shortened, although it is far less clear that additional borrowing would offer net benefits.

The 3 per cent growth forecasts that keep surfacing will eventually be vindicated, but only when structural factors depressing the economy, such as high consumer and corporate debt ratios, glutted real estate markets, and the secular decline in defence spending, have loosened their grip. How long the adjustment will take has been one of the more accurate leading indicators.

The housing and construc-

# Major's moment of truth

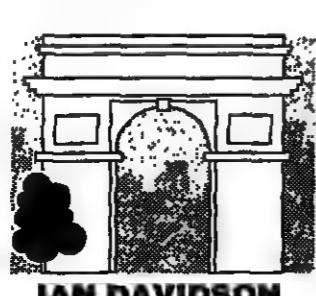
**J**ohn Major's decision to bring the Maastricht treaty back to parliament within the next few months means that he knows the moment of truth cannot be postponed any longer.

In the end there could be no alternative to a decisive trial of strength between the prime minister and the Euro-rebels, and sooner must be better than later, because the mere passage of time could only make his position weaker still.

He has no option but to put the question to the test, because failure to ratify the Maastricht treaty would mean the ruin of his political credibility at home, and the ruin of Britain's credibility in the Community. Until last Thursday procrastination and evasion might have seemed a safer policy, but in reality it would just have been a slower and more insidious road to the same sort of ruin.

The consequence would be that the UK would be marginalised when the other member states started to discuss between themselves - as they undoubtedly would - alternative arrangements.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl and President François Mitterrand have recently stressed their continued commitment to the existing 12-nation Community. No doubt that is what they would prefer, but if the Maastricht treaty were to fall in Britain, there is no chance that the other member states would sit with their hands folded, waiting for something to turn up.



IAN DAVIDSON  
on Europe

the Maastricht treaty on the rails, or look for some alternative, he needs to know how things stand very soon.

Mr Major's domestic project for going into battle for the Maastricht treaty is that he believes he will be able to claim important improvements in the way the treaty will operate. Among other things, he expects to get a piece of paper agreed at the Birmingham summit which will put strict limits on gratuitous interference by the Brussels institutions. Specifically, this should clarify and strengthen the principle of "subsidiarity", by which the Community should not intervene in matters which could be better handled in the member states.

The problem with this so-called "Birmingham declaration" is not just that it is bound to be juridically ambiguous, but that it is transparently intended to deceive. Britain and others are trying to blame the Commission for the current wave of popular anti-Community sentiment, which surfaced in the French referendum. But to pretend that the Commission has grabbed power from the member states to satisfy the overweening centralist ambitions of Jacques Delors is deliberate and shameless misrepresentation.

The Commission does not deserve to be idealised. It is no doubt bureaucratic, self-satisfied and incompetent; but it is no more bureaucratic, self-satisfied and incompetent than the British Treasury, or indeed any Whitehall department. The fundamental point is that the

Commission has no powers except those given by the member states; and the attempt to make it a general scapegoat for the present malaise is grotesque.

If the government serves up this kind of deception as its primary life-line to ratification, it is obviously in deep psychological trouble. Last Thursday Mr Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, gave a speech which was meant to be a strong defence of the Maastricht treaty. Unfortunately, it showed that the government does not really like any part of the treaty; not European monetary union, nor a common foreign policy, nor powers for the European Parliament, nor the social charter, nor immigration and justice - nothing.

Instead, Mr Hurd claimed that the treaty would make it easier to enlarge the Community, to conclude the Uruguay Round, implement the single market and reform the agricultural policy. Alas, all these fall-back claims are simply untrue.

If the Hurd speech gives a true picture of what the government collectively thinks about Maastricht, then it almost certainly cannot push the treaty through the House of Commons.

It is one thing to make an appointment with fate. It is quite another to muster the spiritual intensity to win over the wavering and cove the rebels. This government does not like the treaty which it described a bare 10 months ago as a triumph for Britain, and it shows

The solution to last Saturday's prize puzzle will be published with names of winners on Saturday October 17.

# The risk of a triple dip

SECTION 10

tion industries, normally the first to benefit from lower interest rates, are also flashing amber. Home sales and construction outlays have fallen sharply recently despite the lowest interest rates for nearly three decades. Analysts are alarmed by signs that non-residential construction is again collapsing, having appeared to stabilise earlier this year. With corporate giants such as IBM announcing big staff cutbacks, an early firming of demand for office space, which remains in chronic excess supply in nearly every American city, seems improbable.

The economic outlook is much worse than most forecasters - certainly the White House - ever envisaged. But it would be wrong to exaggerate the risks. If a triple dip materialises at all, it is likely to be similar to last year's mid-downturn - a stalling of growth in which some, but not all, sectors and regions slip temporarily into recession.

But even this degree of discomfort may be avoided if the Fed opts to cut interest rates again after next week's meeting of governors and regional presidents. The betting on Wall Street is that interest rates will be reduced, despite the risks of turbulence in foreign exchange markets and the proximity of a presidential election. At the margin this will help revive confidence, although it is hard to see the current level of rates as a binding constraint on economic growth. The odds that a new president will authorise a fiscal stimulus next spring have also shortened, although it is far less clear that additional borrowing would offer net benefits.

The 3 per cent growth forecasts that keep surfacing will eventually be vindicated, but only when structural factors depressing the economy, such as high consumer and corporate debt ratios, glutted real estate markets, and the secular decline in defence spending, have loosened their grip. How long the adjustment will take has been one of the more accurate leading indicators.

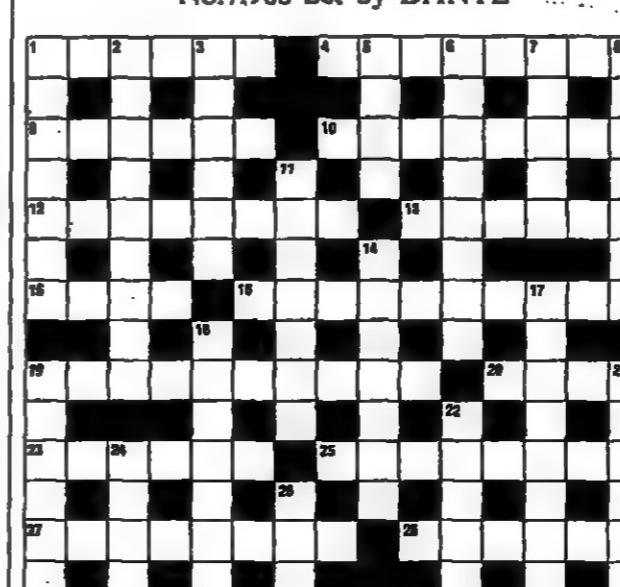
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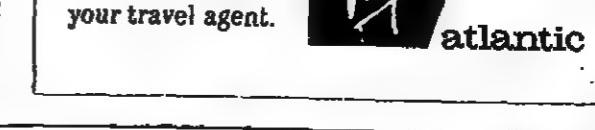
- Where an adder slides to and fro? (6)
- Wild pig in its own fat calls for old port (8)
- Work that is about making capital investment (6)
- Said and done in making a complaint (8)
- Injured by swindle in currency (8)
- Honour I dream about (6)
- Flag with a tale of heroism (4)
- Split tongue, perhaps (5)
- Withstanding underground movement (10)
- A return of service which is some way off (4)
- The academic field (6)
- Element may be Athenian in any case (8)
- Vessel manoeuvring in River Tamar (8)
- Kick into wind again (6)
- Another needless cut (6)
- Girl with fish to sell down the river (6)
- Posts a slim package (5)
- Career people (4)

- Dire Straits are recording ones? (7)
- Make sweet turnover to follow a spring vegetable (9)
- Period of redemption, state article by church (6)
- General assistant (4)
- Eggs this saint on at times (8)
- Gall arranged by one having a reason for innocence (5)
- The fall of French currency (7)
- Common soldier? (7)
- Loose bones scattered round the church (7)
- Sick of getting the red card? (3-6)
- Big copper's ex gets kiss (5)
- Novel, article and story (7)
- Uncommon payment for an author (7)
- It has row upon row of rows (6)
- Posts a slim package (5)
- Career people (4)

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October 5, 1992

FINANCIAL TIMES SURVEY

# TECHNOLOGY IN THE OFFICE

## SECTION III

Monday October 5 1992

**E**ver since the first personal computers began turning up in office desktops more than a decade ago, the prospect of a paperless, automated and super-productive office of the future has remained tantalisingly just out of reach.

Despite the advent of office technology, about 85 per cent of information used in the office is still stored on paper rather than electronically. Indeed, far from dispensing with paper, office workers are handling increasingly larger volumes of it.

At one organisation interviewed as part of a recent UK study by management consultants Touche Ross, the 2,000 staff dealt with 45 tonnes of incoming mail last year, and 45 tonnes of outgoing mail - equivalent to generating 25kg of paper per person.

The Touche Ross study of

information management revealed that although 70 per cent of organisations believed they had "too much paper" (which they generated themselves), the same organisations listed their most significant problem as not having enough space to store their records.

The report also showed that through poor management of records, companies are starved of information. Between 40 and 70 per cent of staff lack sufficient information to do their jobs properly. The remainder tend to have too little rather than too much.

"We conducted the survey to confirm our belief that businesses are suffering costs by not managing information successfully," said Mr David Best, a partner at Touche Ross and a leading expert on information management. "We know that there are significant benefits to be achieved and we wanted to see if we could identify them and any of the pitfalls encountered along the way."

"Our findings show that a high percentage of information is paper-based and almost one quarter of organisations have no standards and procedures for dealing with it," said Julia Parsons, co-author of the report. "Management rarely sees paper-based information as a complementary building



**I**nnovation abounds in the latest office designs and technology. Pictured left is the London video-conferencing room in the communications planning centre of AT&T, the US telecommunications group. The video complex was designed by the Business Design Group



**T**he news and current affairs department of the BBC in London (pictured right) has streamlined its internal fax communications system with the Xerox Lan/Fax Express 21, a time-saving device which electronically connects 20 PC terminals. Users can generate, send, receive and view faxes without having to leave their workstations. Plain paper copies of messages are printed out only when required, thus helping to reduce the volume of paperwork

### IN THIS SURVEY

- Networks: Office PC networks are increasingly popular ..... Page 2
- Portables: Computing on the move is a realistic business option ..... Page 2
- Printers: The printer market today is fiercely competitive ..... Page 3
- Fax machines become faster, cheaper and more sophisticated ..... Page 4
- Telecommunications: The appeal of the cordless office ..... Page 5
- Document management: How to move a mountain of paper ..... Page 6
- Ergonomics: White-collar workers face dangers at their desks ..... Page 8

■ Editorial production: Phil Sanders

## Paperless dream still tantalises

New hardware and software offer fresh opportunities, writes Paul Taylor

**F**low of information through a computer system, and so it does not manage it in an integrated fashion."

Nevertheless, the study also revealed a dramatic growth in the use of electronic data, even though there is a long way to go before people give up the "comfort" of paper. There is also a definite trend towards optical storage although there is no corresponding rapid decrease in the use of paper," said Ms Parsons.

It is perhaps the failure of organisations to view, plan and monitor the office process in its entirety which possibly explains some of the disappointment and disillusionment with office automation most often expressed by those who have funded it.

In the past this has often led to the piecemeal purchase of a higher quality photocopier, faster printer or new PC, but a failure to automate the whole process. As a result, the basic

wireless office telephone lines - the productivity gains and potential savings could be substantial. As a result, the Washington-based consultancy EMC estimates that by 1996 France, Germany, Italy and the UK will have installed 8.4m wireless office telephone lines.

There is also a growing awareness of the advantages of other wireless data communications systems such as wireless local area networks (Lans), and of electronic data interchange (EDI) which can remove the need to send and receive standard paper forms such as invoices, orders and bills.

Similarly it is now possible to bring together previously unconnected pieces of electronic hardware. For example, multifunction digital devices which combine some or all of the features of a fax machine, scanner, photocopier and laser printer have begun to appear. High-volume electronic

printers which link directly to computers are now available, as are digital copiers which scan a hard copy once before reproducing multiple copies.

Fax and other communications functions are being built into PCs and office networks, removing the need for paper print-outs entirely. Desktop video-conferencing using a card plugged into a PC also already possible and may in time reduce the need to travel to meetings.

Meanwhile multimedia systems enable text, computer graphics, full-colour photographs, moving video and sound to be combined and have applications in sales, training and internal communications.

As the digital office becomes a real technological possibility, equipment suppliers are increasingly focusing on their core expertise. But they are also forming loose partnerships

and working in collaboration with each other to combine technologies and provide more effective "solutions" for the marketplace.

This trend is illustrated by Kodak's list of development partners. Kodak is applying its imaging technology expertise with Novell in networking software, IBM and Apple in computer hardware, Digital Equipment in open systems, Lotus for certain PC software and with Adobe which has incorporated Kodak's Photo YCC colour image standard in its latest Postscript Level 3 page description language.

The availability of various digital technologies which need to be integrated is only one of the issues that management consultants believe needs to be addressed if office productivity is to be improved. Another is whether the management structures in organisations have developed to complement the available

technology? In many companies, responsibility for different pieces of equipment will lie with separate departments. But it is generally accepted that in order to implement and operate an integrated strategy it is necessary to put someone in charge of office automation as a whole, rather than maintaining distinct roles for the data processing manager, the information technology manager and others.

**O**n reason for identifying someone as responsible for office automation is that he or she will also need to consider other factors, not least the office environment itself. The quality of the office environment is an increasingly "hot" issue for equipment manufacturers and employers. Legislative requirements are steadily being tightened, a process which is often being spearheaded by the European Commission. Over

"Ergonomics is no longer a fad or a fashion," said Mr Philip Vanhaute, vice-president for marketing and customer concerns at ICL Personal Systems. Instead, he says, it has moved into the mainstream.

What ICL has identified is

that automation of the office is about much more than just providing the equipment. Criti-

Continued on Page 2

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## TECHNOLOGY IN THE OFFICE 3

**U**ntil the "paperless office" becomes a reality rather than just a dream there will be a need for printers to turn personal computer data into words and graphics on sheets of paper.

Office printer technology has come a long way since the early days. As PCs have become more powerful, and software more sophisticated, users have sought more flexible print options.

The printer market today is fiercely competitive and second only, in terms of volume and value, to PC hardware itself. According to Romtec, the Berkshire-based marketing consultancy, 745,000 printers worth £517m were sold in 1991. Volume sales are forecast to increase by 8 per cent by 1995 and by at least 20 per cent to about £240m in terms of value.

But the mix of sales is also changing rapidly from older, "impact" printing techniques such as dot matrix and daisywheel, to newer, non-impact methods such as inkjet and light-emitting diode (LED) and laser.

While daisywheel printers have all but disappeared, dot-matrix printers still hold more than 40 per

cent of the total printer market and have an important role to play. The latest 24-pin dot matrix printers from companies such as Epson, Panasonic, Star and Oki are capable of producing high quality text and graphics at bargain prices.

Meanwhile, dot matrix line printers, with speeds of up to 5,000 lines per minute, are the office workhorses, especially suited to printing multipart forms, invoices and other stationary on continuous-feed paper.

Nevertheless, as prices tumble, the underlying trend is towards non-impact machines. These are much quieter than impact printers and combine high speed with advanced text and graphics handling capabilities.

The level of demand for inkjet printers, which can now be bought for as little as £200, has even taken some suppliers by surprise. Hewlett-Packard, the market leader, had to build a new US factory to turn out 500,000 inkjets a month.

Lightweight inkjet printers such as those sold by Cannon, Mannesmann Tally and Kodak are also proving very successful in the fast-growing portable market.

## ■ PRINTERS

## More flexible options

But in the office desktop market, where users are demanding higher print capabilities to match their software, those who need speed as well as quality can now buy eight-page-per-minute (ppm) laser printers for less than £1,000 at street prices, or £400 lasers for less than £600.

Laser and LED printers accounted for more than a quarter of all printer sales in the UK last year and are expected to take at least a third of 1995 sales. Inkjet printers are forecast to take a further third, giving non-impact technologies about two thirds of the total UK market by 1995.

Another important factor driving laser printer sales is the increasing trend towards networking PCs and the growth of groupware computing, which opens up the possibility of sharing printers and helps justify the steady migration to more expensive, high-speed (16ppm to 20ppm), heavy-duty network laser printers such as Compaq's new PageMark printers aimed at a market expected to reach \$30bn by the mid-1990s.

The worldwide market for personal printers is forecast to grow by just over 18 per cent 1991 to 1995, with respective market shares by volume of 22.4 and 22.1 per cent. Because Epson's product mix is biased toward lower-cost dot matrix printers, compared to HP's focus on laser and inkjet machines, their market share by value is very different, with HP taking 34.4 per cent and Epson just 13 per cent.

Within the laser printer market, HP is the clear market leader, but under increasing competitive pressure from companies such as Lexmark, the IBM alliance company, and Oki, both of which have been increasing market share.

HP's success in laser printing owes much to the development of its Printer Command Language (PCL). The vast majority of laser and LED printers support PCL, leaving manufacturers to differentiate their products through other features such as font capabilities, greater speed and easier paper handling. A

growing number of laser printers, however, now support Adobe PostScript which offers greater font and graphics flexibility than even the latest versions of PCL.

Among the most exciting developments in printer technology is the gradual appearance of colour desktop top printing capability. Some dot-matrix machines provide cheap, but somewhat limited, colour options. Colour inkjets provide a more flexible higher quality option and are increasingly popular. But colour lasers are rapidly declining in price although they still command a hefty price premium and therefore serve a specialist niche rather than a mass market.

Laser printer manufacturers are focusing on the environment. Most laser printers tend to generate a lot of waste in the form of used toner cartridges and printer drums. In response to growing concern about the environment many manufacturers now operate cartridge recycling schemes.

Some manufacturers have adopted even more radical approaches. Among them Kyocera claims its new ecologically friendly Ecosys FS-1500 printer reduces the cost of ownership by about two thirds to 0.6p a page. Unlike conventional lasers which need replacement printer drums periodically, Kyocera's LED machine is built around an amorphous silicon (aSi) drum which is durable, scratch-resistant and, it is claimed, will last the life of the printer - even when using abrasive recycled paper.

Another potential problem with laser printers, and xerographic copiers, is that they generate ozone which can pose a health hazard to office workers and has been blamed for triggering allergies. The ozone is normally trapped by an air filter, but with use the filter clogs up and ozone emissions can rise.

Now Canon, which makes 60 per cent of the world's laser printer engines, has developed a way to reduce ozone emission substantially by replacing the highly charged wire in a laser printer with a special charge transfer roller so that even if the filter clogs there is still no significant release of ozone. Other printer manufacturers, including both HP and Kyocera, are following Canon's lead.

Paul Taylor

**THE 1990s will bring about the biggest revolution in office software that we have ever seen. The decade is about usability, software that is flexible, interesting to use and designed to meet the real needs of the business.**

Gone are those boring inflexible systems that operated on different computers, never talking to each other and churning out endless reams of paper which no-one read.

We are now seeing the emergence of new and exciting software that will pave the way to fully integrated office solutions of the future. Software has been developed with Europe in mind, providing a standard solution for subsidiary companies across Europe, no matter in which country they operate.

The trend today is towards Open Systems: systems that can operate on a variety of hardware platforms, outside the control of any one manufacturer. Open Systems encompasses the multi-user environments of DOS Networks and Unix. There are still many suppliers of DOS Networks and many flavours of Unix, but the most important aspect in this realignment is choosing the operating system for the future.

It is now accepted that the old proprietary operating systems - that is systems developed by hardware manufacturers to run exclusively on their own hardware platforms - are just about dead and buried. The only exception is IBM with its proprietary mid-range and main-frame systems.

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September 1992 has brought with it a large number of launches of new and innovative business and accounting software products.

Sage, with its market leading entry-level Sterling product, is launching Sterling +2 which is an advanced design of the existing product, incorporating the advantages of either the Windows environment or the character-based DOS environment - whichever the user prefers.

It will be one of the first packages to have one screen that shows all of the information for the quarterly VAT return, and an invoice entry

screen that really looks like an invoice.

There has been a significant gap in the Unix market for highly functional mid-range business software capable of handling more than 50 users. In that market, Tetra has revamped its market-leading Unix package, Chameleon, as Chameleon 2000 with higher functionality designed around the informix Online database engine to cope with larger volumes of transactions.

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There has been a significant gap in the Unix market for highly functional mid-range

## TECHNOLOGY IN THE OFFICE 4

## ■ FAX MACHINES

## Back to the future

ALMOST 30 years ago, in 1964, Xerox unveiled the Long Distance Xerography terminal, the world's first facsimile machine for business use.

The LDX system, which consisted of a separate scanner and printer each the size of a four-drawer filing cabinet, transmitted typed, written or drawn images and printed them on plain paper.

Since then the business fax machine has shrunk considerably in size and has become an integral part of most offices. In Britain alone there will be an estimated 1m fax machines in use by year-end - almost triple the number just three years ago.

Fax machines today are becoming faster, cheaper and more sophisticated with some new models even boasting colour transmission.

Equipment sales grew rapidly in the 1980s and although growth established markets have been slowed by the recession, office sales have been buoyed in recent years by the emergence of plain paper, laser, and ink-jet fax machines which are gradually replacing machines which use thermal paper.

Today there are an estimated 15m-20m fax machines worldwide, a number which is expected to grow to more than 30m by the end of next year. Most are of the Group 3 industry

standard and can send an A4 sheet across the world in seconds for the price of a telephone call.

By far the biggest installed base is in the US, but according to Datamonitor's 1992 European Customer Equipment study, annual facsimile machine sales in Europe have grown from 350,000 five years ago to more than 1.7m last year.

These figures hide some other striking trends. In particular the structure of the European market has been changing. Germany has overtaken the UK in terms of sales volume and rapidly-falling prices have begun to put a break on market value growth in recent years.

Furthermore, mature markets such as the UK tend to polarise into two segments; cheap low-end machines manufactured by companies such as Amstrad and a host of Far Eastern suppliers, and expensive, high-quality devices such as plain paper faxes which are often purchased as an upgrade.

The range of machines available has expanded dramatically. Despite the recession, fax-us-

ally. Currently there are more than 200 different types of fax machine on offer from 35 suppliers in the UK market.

Many of these are small, cheap, desktop machines, ideal for the growing personal or small office market. Often they combine the functions of telephone, answering machine, photocopier and fax and can switch between voice and fax automatically therefore requiring only a single telephone line.

But almost 30 per cent of the machines currently on sale in the UK are plain paper fax machines. Although plain paper faxes are generally more expensive than thermal machines, the price difference is narrowing and the shift towards plain paper faxes reflects some of the problems associated with their thermal counterparts.

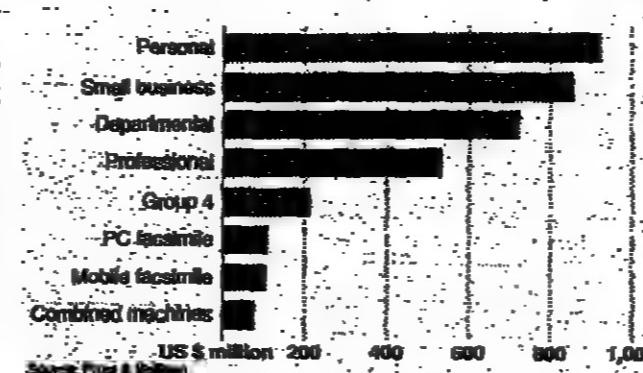
These include high paper cost, the tendency of text on thermal paper to fade making it unsuitable for filing or storage, the difficulty of writing on thermal fax paper and problems re-sending thermal faxes.

Despite the recession, fax-us-

age is also increasing. The UK market will be worth about £750m this year and is growing by about 30 per cent a year compared to 5 per cent for voice traffic.

A recent Gallup survey conducted for Pitney Bowes Facsimile Systems Division revealed that 31 per cent of the top 500 companies in the UK increased fax usage over the past 12 months despite the recession and 91 per cent believe fax machines helped increase their productivity.

## European market for facsimile machines



A laptop computer being used to send an outgoing fax on the recently-launched Xerox LAN/Fax Express 33 system

have been around since the mid-1980s the introduction of ISDN has been slower than expected. In the meantime, the transmission speed of Group 3 machines has been further enhanced and an alternative 64kbs standard has emerged called either Group 3bis or G364.

To overcome some of the problems identified by fax users, telecommunications groups have seized the opportunity to generate additional income by offering value-added services to customers.

For example in the US American Telephone and Telegraph offers a subscription service called EnhancedFAX which enables customers to broadcast a fax virtually simultaneously, to as many as 10,000 fax machines worldwide. In the

UK, Mercury's managed fax service, called SureFax, provides a particularly sophisticated set of value-added services aimed at multinational customers and launched by the Cable and Wireless group subsidiary last October.

One significant growth area targeted by the SureFax service is PC-generated faxes. It is estimated that about 80 per cent of all faxes begin life as a word-processor file on a PC.

But the document is usually printed out before being loaded into a fax machine for delivery.

Only 2 per cent of fax traffic is currently sent directly from PCs. But plug-in cards, external fax-modems and LAN Fax servers are already providing portable computers, desktop PCs and, most significantly, networked PCs with the power

to send and receive faxes. Prices for PC fax cards are already lower than those for a cheap fax and fax cards sales are expected to grow quickly. Indeed, the distinctions between fax machines and other office equipment are becoming increasingly blurred.

Equipment manufacturers such as Panasonic are already selling fax machines with computer interfaces which allow PCs to control the operation of the fax.

Anything received on the fax can be printed out or saved on the PC.

Other devices such as the JetFax produced by Fujitsu connect to laser printers and enable them to print incoming faxes or send anything generated on-screen as a fax.

More generally, office equipment suppliers say they have recently detected increased interest in "multifunctional digital devices" such as the Xerox 3010 which combines a plain paper fax with a photocopier.

So the fax machine of the future may bear more than a passing resemblance to the LDX.

Not only is it likely to use plain paper, it will probably also combine a range of functions including document scanner, photocopier and printer.

Paul Taylor

Indeed, DOS is likely to retain its faithful followers for a long time yet, so further developments can be expected. An example is WordStar for DOS which has been further developed to include, among other attributes, fax support that allows users to easily create laser-quality faxable files (PCX) from their documents without a laser printer.

The output files can be used by many fax software products and boards for direct transmission to fax machines or other computers.

However, taking a closer look at Windows word processors, a recent report published by market research organisation Romette indicates that when it comes to market share by units, Microsoft's Word for Windows 2.0 is clear favorite with 58.8 per cent, followed by WordPerfect 5.1 for Windows 23.8 per cent, Ami Pro 2.0 for Windows 13.9 per cent, and WordStar 1.0 for Windows 2 per cent.

Julie Harnett

## ■ WORD PROCESSING

## Typewriters still in demand

You know when a market is not as buoyant as it once was. The market researchers find more pressing subjects to study. So it is with the electronic typewriter (ET) and dedicated word processor (DWP) markets.

But although the imminent demise of this sector was forecast when the IBM PC was born 11 years ago, ETs and DWPs are still in demand in banks, building societies, educational establishments and government departments.

To take just one example, after almost two years of thorough investigation, Barclays Bank has awarded a two-year contract to Triumph Adler UK for the supply of the BSS 300. Ideal for the computerised environment, it offers all the advantages of a typewriter and dedicated word processor, yet comes with MS DOS-compatible disk drives.

Triumph Adler also believes there is still a market for the professional typewriter and has revamped the SE 700 series to provide almost silent

operation and easier replacement of typewheels and ribbons.

Mr Alastair Booth, divisional manager of Olivetti UK, says: "There is a core market for ETs and DWPs that cannot be served by the PC and, bearing in mind that profit margins have not been squeezed to the same extent, it has been viable for us to formulate a pretty intensive programme of product development."

As part of that programme

Amstrad also has its eye on the home office market

the company has just launched a Windows version of its top-end secretarial workstation, the ETW4000S, a system that has proved popular among solicitors and architects.

According to Olivetti, there is also a growing market among home users, hence the decision to launch a range of portable ETs and a portable

word processor last month.

Amstrad, too, still finds a ready market in offices for the PCW-dedicated word processors, but also has its eye on the home office market with the launch of a portable WP.

Olympia UK finds that the Comfort WP series is still a very popular line. So popular, in fact, that it sees no rush to launch the Competence range which is waiting in the wings. What of Olympia's traditional typewriter ranges? Mr Colwyn Munro, general manager, says: "The trend is towards providing links so they can be connected up to a PC to provide letter quality printing. It is a growing demand from users who do not necessarily want to put everything through the laser printer."

Panasonic has just launched

the ET-W1030 (EAS), portable word processor offering spelling checker, thesaurus and MS DOS file converter, a 14-line facit display, 3.5in floppy disk drive and 14cps printer.

Samsung has entered this sector with the SQ-W1000 (E280), a system for personal use which offers the convenience of a typewriter with the advanced functions of a word processor and floppy disk storage.

Smith Corona may have abandoned the PC marketplace, but it intends to stay in the portable word processing market where it has fielded machines that feature industry standard 3.5in disk drives and MS DOS file format compatibility with WordPerfect and ASCII text converters.

Canon claims the Starwriter

personal word processor is one of the most successful products it has ever launched. It has launched a fourth, top-of-the-range version which introduces a new concept to this sector of the market: personal publishing.

It costs just £299 for an all-in-one compact portable unit complete with screen, floppy disk drive and bubblejet printer.

Brother recently introduced the portable WP-70 (E525) which features advanced text editing with spelling checker and mailmerge as well as a spreadsheet, address book and calendar/scheduler/calculator built-in. It also includes 3.5in floppy disk drive and 15cps daisywheel printer.

Sharp has just launched the sub-E200 PA-1200 portable word processor featuring a

high-contrast LCD display, full-function keyboard and integrated MS DOS-compatible disk drive which runs a modified version of WordPerfect word processing software.

The continued demand for ETs and DWPs in no way diminishes the need for word processing software for running on standard desktop PCs.

The packages on offer today have little in common with the early 1980s versions. They offer sophisticated editing with spelling checkers and thesauruses and will even check grammar, punctuation, syntax and style, and enable presentation-quality documents to be produced to desktop publishing standards, including graphics and photographs.

But although there is a lot

more competition, the core market is still dominated by the few.

Figures from the May 1992 Software Sales Report compiled by market research specialist Context show that WordPerfect commanded 60 per cent of total UK word processing sales in the second quarter, WordStar 31.2 per cent and Microsoft 7.8 per cent.

The total value of software sales in May was more than

DOS is likely to retain its faithful followers for a long time yet

236.5m, of which WordPerfect contributed 15.4m.

While WordPerfect for Windows increased its share of WP software sales by 2.5 per cent to 7 per cent, sales of WordPerfect for DOS rose from 50 per cent to 53 per cent, dispelling the myth that people are only buying Windows software.

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The traditional Japanese Bonsai is not just a tree in miniature. It's the result of a principle. A principle which combines strength with aesthetic and functional perfection, in a compact form.

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Take the MSC-15NN Portable PC for example. It's a compact, 25 MHz 386SX-based notebook PC with a standard 4MB memory which is expandable to 20MB, making it one of the most powerful notebooks available.

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## TECHNOLOGY IN THE OFFICE 5

## ■ TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**Appeal of the cordless office**

SOMETHING usually goes wrong when you leave your desk and rely on a secretary or a colleague to take telephone messages. If you get a message at all, the chances are you will be given the wrong number, the wrong name, a confused message, or one that comes a day too late.

If people could take their phones with them about the workplace, the problems would not arise. And the use of mobile or cordless telephones would have the added benefit of saving time and money for the telecommunications manager who currently has to rewire the office each time staff are relocated.

The appeal of a cordless office has not escaped the attention of telecommunications equipment manufacturers such as the UK-based GPT and North American companies Motorola and Northern Telecom who have been developing cordless telephone products for the past two to three years. This involves the development of both cordless telephone handsets and office switches, known as a private automatic branch exchange (pabx), that can route calls to and from people using the cordless handsets.

Until now, telecommunications managers have been somewhat sceptical of cordless office products. This is largely because they rely on the same technology, called CT2, as the mobile telephone service known as telepoint. Handsets designed for the cordless office are the same as those for telepoint services and can also be used as cordless telephones in the home. CT2 got off to a bad start because the three telephone services that were launched in the UK in 1988 have all since closed because of their failure to capture subscribers.

Placed marketing strategies were partly behind their demise, but another factor was the poor functioning of the equipment. Unless business users can be guaranteed a quality of service that at least matches a wired telephone system, it

is already proving to be more reliable and popular than the original UK services.

Users have also been sceptical about cordless office products because suppliers have been talking about the systems they are developing since 1988 but have been slow to bring out products.

The first products are, however, now beginning to appear. GPT launched its GPT 2030 cordless system in the UK in April and will bring out more sophisticated products for larger offices at the end of this year and early next year. GPT is hoping that Mercury will become a main distributor for its cordless systems.

Motorola, the US mobile communications equipment manufacturer, is supplying its Silverlink cordless office systems through UK telephone equipment distributor Rocom while the Canadian manufac-

turer Northern Telecom will be launching office systems in 1992 and 1993. Northern Telecom systems will be distributed by BT which already sells its wired telephone systems.

Japanese companies including Sony, Matsushita and Kokusai are keeping an eye on the market with a view to

developing their own products.

Initially, cordless office products will be significantly more expensive than conventional office systems and of more limited use. Mel Zirros, a senior consultant at MZA, a specialist communications consultancy, says that the cordless systems currently on the market are at least double

the price of conventional fixed systems. But GPT Mobile Systems marketing manager Richard Field, says that GPT is only now ramping up to volume, and as costs come down, GPT will re-evaluate its pricing.

In this respect, the success of cordless office products is tied with the fortunes of telepoint. If telepoint is successful, handset prices for both telepoint and cordless office systems will fall as manufacturers derive economies of scale.

Nevertheless, GPT believes that users

**For large offices, manufacturers are developing systems using another European standard**

will be prepared to pay a premium for cordless products because of their advantages over wired systems. This view is shared by Zirros who reckons: "Once the price differential comes down to 25 per cent, it will be an entirely different ball game."

The GPT 2030 system is only suitable for a few users because the system can connect only three exchange lines and manage, therefore, three simultaneous conversations.

More advanced CT2 cordless office products will support as many as 20 or 30 simultaneous conversations, but manufacturers recognise that it will not be possible to develop bigger systems using CT2 technology.

This means that CT2 cordless office systems will only be suited to small

offices, or for a certain category of office worker such as maintenance staff in bigger companies who tend to spend most of their day moving between different departments or floors.

For large offices, manufacturers are developing systems using another European standard known as the digital European cordless telephone (Dect) system.

Manufacturers such as Sweden's Ericsson or Siemens of Germany that have backed the Dect standard believe that they can develop cordless telephone systems for whole office blocks, and that eventually there will be no need to wire offices.

But the European standard for Dect was only approved this year and the first demonstration of Dect products will not take place until 1993. Tony Warwick, Motorola's director of cordless systems, believes it will be a further two years until Dect products are launched commercially.

There are different views on whether cordless office systems will ultimately mean that the wiring of offices becomes a thing of the past.

Zirros is confident that "most systems will ultimately be cordless." But users are less clear about the future.

John Skarratt, director of the UK Telecommunications Users Foundation, says that "radio is always going to have problems with interference" and that users will remain convinced that it is better to stick to conventional cable.

Dick Cawdwell, director of telecommunications at the Grand Metropolitan leisure group, thinks that cordless office products are interesting because they will remove the need for rewiring.

This causes particular problems for Grand Metropolitan whose head office is in a listed building. Nevertheless, Cawdwell recognises that the risk of replacing wired systems with radio means that "wired offices are not going to go away."

**Mark Newman**

## ■ VOICE SYSTEMS

**Getting the message**

FIVE times as many people hang up when they phone a friend and get an answering machine, than when a business call is answered by a machine, according to a recent survey carried out by Systems Reliability, a UK telecoms company.

Despite their antipathy to answering machines, more than two-thirds of the sample said they owned one. The latest models offer solid-state recording, which means callers' messages are recorded directly onto a chip instead of a tape. There are no moving parts to break down and there is no delay (for the owner's greeting to be rewound) after a caller has left a message.

However, solid-state machines are not cheap. Audiotex sells one for £795. An equivalent machine without solid state costs £30 less.

At the top of the range, BT's Falcon II machine includes a handset, hands-free talking and solid-state outgoing mes-

**Answering machines are still fairly rare in the European business environment**

sage for £170. BT also sells some combined telephones and answering machines with two-way record, which enable conversations to be recorded. But the most basic machine from UK electrical retailer Dixons costs less than £30, and it is not unusual to find built-in answering machines on personal facsimile machines and cordless phones.

Although 75 per cent of calls fail to reach their target, answering machines are still fairly rare in the European business environment. This is also true of voice messaging, the corporate equivalent.

At their simplest, voice mail systems allow callers to leave messages. By dialling the appropriate voice mailbox number (and a code), users can play them back. But most voice messaging systems can do much more. For example, once a caller has left a message, it can be forwarded from the user to a colleague, with instructions attached such as "Please sort out this customer's problem and get back to me."

Voice messaging systems have taken off in the US, partly because the touch-tone phones (needed to operate them) are in wider use. But acceptance has been slow in the UK and continental Europe.

The involvement of the UK cellular phone operators has started to change the picture. Celia and Vodafone, the two main UK service providers have both launched 24-hour voice messaging services. These record all messages left when the mobile phone is switched off and then alert the user when the phone is back on. As well as being a big moneymaker, they have helped to raise the profile of voice mail.

As a result, research company BIS Mackintosh will shortly be revising upwards its public voice messaging forecasts.

It originally forecast UK net-public revenues of \$121.9m for public messaging services this

year, and \$779.9m in 1996. Apart from the cellular operators, leading players in the public voice mail market include Mercury and BT. BT also has a voice mail service for residential users on trial.

In-house (or premises-based) voice mail systems offer similar features to public services. But they involve the one-off purchase of equipment, costing in the region of £10,000 for a 100 users. Public services, on the other hand, are pay-as-you-go.

Most of the premises-based voice mail-voice processing systems available in Europe are based on North American products.

These were pioneered by companies such as Otel (sold by Hewlett Packard in the UK), AT&T, VME (sold by Mercury in the UK), Northern Telecom and Centigram.

There are three main types of voice system: voice messaging, audiotex and voice processing. Audiotex is used for 0898 recorded information, such as racing results, weather information or airline flight times. Some systems can insert live information, such as the results of the latest racing fixture, into recorded information.

Voice processing (or interactive voice response) is the type of technology used in telephone-based home banking systems. It might, for example, prompt the user to "press one to order a cheque book, press two for your bank balance". In essence, these systems link a voice interface to a computer database. They allow customers to input and retrieve information using a touch-tone phone.

The more advanced systems use speech recognition. Because of limitations in the technology, many use voice synthesis to play back the customer's message for checking. One system, sold by US-based Syntellect, can recognise different languages.

There is an increasing amount of overlap between the different voice technologies.

**One system, sold by US-based Syntellect, can recognise different languages**

For example, parts of British Rail are using Systems Reliability's OrbitLink Network for both voice mail (to notify engineers of faults) and voice processing (to order parts and compile statistics on repair times).

The system can also be integrated with local area network-based electronic mail, allowing users to add voice notes to text messages.

However, the main driver in the premises-based voice systems market is integration with fax, according to Amanda Jobbing of BIS Mackintosh.

This enables a customer to phone a supplier, select a product and provide a fax number to which a price-list can be sent automatically. And all without human intervention on the part of the supplier.

The day might come when customers hang up if they get a human on the line.

**Jola Shillingford**

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## TECHNOLOGY IN THE OFFICE 6

## ■ DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

## How to move a mountain



IN a world in which 92m original paper documents are produced every year and corporate files double every 3½ years, document image processing (DIP) would appear to be the answer to every office manager's dream of reducing the mountain of paper in circulation.

For it is possible to store between 20,000 and 30,000 documents on one optical disk, and recall any of them to VDU screens within seconds.

The potential of systems leads market research company BIS Strategic Decisions to forecast a compound annual growth rate of 62 per cent for DIP across Europe by 1995.

Leading companies in the market are bullish about the future, even though the competition gets stronger by the day.

Contenders now include with Agfa, Bell & Howell, Canon, DEC, IBM, FileNet, IDL, Kodak, NCR, Olivetti, Philips, Plexus Computers, ROCC Computers, Tandem, Unisys, Wang and Xionics.

The market could soon get a big boost as a result of the little-publicised European Data Protection Draft Directive that proposes to bring non-electronic media within the scope of the law.

A DIP is the obvious solution to maintaining security for all documentation, since access by

per cent while productivity in the office increased by only 3 per cent? Because office technology concentrated on automating tasks rather than whole processes.

"The office manager, systems manager and IT manager may all automate different aspects of the office process in isolation, only to find they don't fit together."

Kodak's answer is the ImageLink strategy which aims to merge micrographics with digital imaging technologies; integrate imaging systems with information systems; and, ultimately, utilise imaging to improve productivity.

Systems currently available allow a document image to be retrieved to a VDU screen from optical disk or microfilm, distributed to other terminals or sent electronically to be faxed, printed or copied, then re-filled, all at the touch of a button.

PPP Private Patient's Plan, however, is anticipating getting rid of microfiche in favour of optical technology supplied by FileNet.

The solution being implemented is an industry standard PC-based Workflow Business System

unauthorised personnel could be more easily prevented via the use of standard computer security procedures.

All paper documents that have to be kept for legal reasons could then be put under padlock and key.

However, the advent of optical disk-based DIP itself does not make the paper-free, or even the paper-less, information secure if implemented in isolation.

In the real world, DIP is merely a component part of the corporate-wide document and information processing and management requirements.

There are several recent developments now capable of supporting such a strategy.

Mr Mike Mansell, head of Kodak Office Imaging points out: "During the 1990s, factory productivity increased by 75

Royal Bank of Scotland cardholder services use an Olivetti Document Image Processing system

In the technical document field, SMGL (Standard Generalised Markup Language) is fast becoming the *de facto* standard for interchange of technical documents. For this reason, Interleaf has added this option to Interleaf 5.

Mr Mike Willcocks, managing director of Interleaf UK, says: "SMGL is important in that it will allow business to freely share information held by different document publishing systems across a variety of platforms and applications from different manufacturers.

In effect, information becomes neutral and that is critical requirement to the future success of EDM systems."

The management of Expo '92 were luckier than most in that they could start from scratch to build an enterprise-wide document strategy, at the heart of which is the Rank Xerox EDM software solution, GlobalView, installed on a network server on the 20Km Ethernet LAN, the longest LAN in the world outside the Pentagon.

It is enabling some 600 users to produce documents on any word processing or desktop

publishing workstation and electronically store, print, fax, copy or distribute them via electronic mail, with instantaneous person-to-person document delivery ensuring ultra efficiency and high productivity.

By the time Expo had

opened, staff had produced and distributed some 250m impressions; a figure expected to have doubled by the time Expo closes on 20 October 1992.

Electronic document management (EDM) incorporates what is often called "workflow" management; a combination of techniques and technology to manage the entire document process at every stage in a document's life cycle, be it in paper, image or editable electronic form; created in-house or received from an external source; intended for internal consumption by individuals or entire departments or external consumption by customers or business associates; and be it active or archival.

Targetting this market is European Information Technology (ETI) with a combination of three products that provide an integrated approach to "multimedia workflow management" which supports every activity except video; store, edit, despatch verbal, textual and graphical information within and between offices.

ETI Scan-Link is an entry-level DIP system providing users with a complete electronic archiving and retrieval system for paper-based documents.

Office-Link is a store and forward message switch which connects network users to telex, fax, electronic mail, LANs, WANs and X35 networks.

And VoiceLink is a voice mail system which connects the PBX to a PC LAN. All can work in a Windows environment and can be integrated with management applications.

tools such as Lotus Notes.

The key to the success of any system is the ability not only to store documents rapidly and easily but to be able to retrieve them just as easily and quickly.

For example, how long would it take you to count the number of times the words "at", "the" and "be" appeared in 55,000 documents? Days? Weeks? Months?

The electronic Filing Cabinet (EFC) from Metrologie International would take just 17 seconds.

The secret is "fuzzy search," a content-based retrieval method and an advanced neural network artificial intelligence (AI) and adaptive pat-

Mr Geoff Bedser, senior consultant at CMG who specialises in DIP feasibility studies and systems evaluations, says that the average payback is between 18 months and three years providing the right system is selected and properly implemented in the first place.

But at BP Chemicals, Mr Alan Randle, manager IT systems, estimates that the payback on the Trinico DIP will be much more rapid.

"When we compared the costs of storage and handling and the delay in copying and transporting paper records with the ease of holding them on optical disks and transmitting them electronically, we found we could achieve a six-month payback."

One of the key indicators to the future of the market must be the announcement that SA SoftCore NA, the first company in Europe to receive funding from Advent International under Apple Computer's European Venture Capital Programme, has set up a UK subsidiary.

The first product to be launched by SoftCore is Archis File, an Apple Macintosh-based system priced at £10,000.

term recognition technology from Excalibur Technologies which enables document contents to be automatically indexed as it is entered.

Utilising open systems network protocols, any image or file can be delivered to any other system on the network with document security provided using DEC's Ultra II file privileges and procedures for protected read and write access to all files.

With prices starting at £29,950, such systems are not even out of the reach of smaller companies. Is the investment worth it?

Julie Harnett

## ■ PHOTOCOPIERS

## Fiercely competitive market

PHOTOCOPYING may be one of the oldest office technologies, but it continues to be one of the most fiercely competitive markets - and one of the most contentious.

The past year has witnessed the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC) investigation into toner supply; the Office of Fair Trading inquiry into dodgy dealer copier contracts; and the European Commission debating, yet again, the question of levies on imported Japanese copiers.

All the while sales were

being squeezed. Market research company Dataquest has yet to finalise its market figures for 1991 but, according to Jacqueline Hendriks, copiers research analyst, 1991 UK copier placements decreased by 11 per cent compared with 1990 to 144,500 units.

The three main reasons for the decline were the impact of the recession, which has restricted user spending; the shift in copier placements from low to mid- and high-range machines; and the increased demand for less expensive reconditioned/refurbished machines.

In terms of market share by unit placements, the top three suppliers last year were Canon with 30 per cent, Rank Xerox with 18 per cent and Sharp with 9 per cent. Toshiba stands in fourth position followed by Mita in fifth.

Canon did well because of its strength in the colour market, while Rank Xerox did well because of a significant increase in 91 cpm (copies per minute) placements and because it receives revenues from its service operation as well (a fact which the MMC found upset some of their dealers), the report states.

Although Sharp has pulled back from its involvement in the colour copier market until 1993, the company looks set to do better in future following its entry into the higher volume market. According to Dataquest, Konica and Minolta are showing good form in Segment 3 (31-44 cpm). But, as the MMC concluded during its investigation, the most appropriate market share measure of a copier company's current performance is placements weighted by recommended monthly copy volume.

That meant, in 1990, that the Rank Xerox share was 31 per cent (down from 30 per cent in the heady pre-Japanes days of the mid-1970s), Canon had 7 per cent, Kodak 7 per cent, Toshiba 6 per cent and Sharp 5 per cent. The MMC concluded during its investigation, the most appropriate market share measure of a copier company's current performance is placements weighted by recommended monthly copy volume.

Rank Xerox is growing in its target markets and continuing to gain market share lost to the Japanese in the early 1980s. To keep the momentum going, a £25m investment programme is under way, £6m of which is being spent redeveloping the Systems Centre at Welwyn Garden City in Hertfordshire.

Over the past few years,

Rank Xerox has reduced its number of suppliers from 4,500 to 350 and says Mr Allaire, increased quality more than 100 times. The product development cycle has been shortened by as much as 50 per cent and product costs have been cut by 30 per cent, despite inflation.

With the market moving upwards in the high volume sector, it is only to be expected that there would be competition from the Far East.

However, according to Hendriks, the high volume market (in Segments 5-6, 70cpm and over), will continue to be dominated by Kodak, Océ and Rank Xerox:

"The Japanese are developing higher-volume products, but they do not represent real competition because they cannot sustain the copy volumes".

It will not stop the Japanese making inroads, and Ricoh and Konica are just two gunning for the high-volume sector.

Nevertheless, the advent of the small, integrated systems copier is an interesting development because it makes on-demand document reproduc-



The Kodak ColorEdge copier can output colour data and image files from computer workstations

tion a reality for every business, with completed multi-page document sets produced and ready for despatch in a matter of minutes, without the need for lengthy user training.

With prices typically around the £6,000-12,000 mark but starting at £1,650 for a low-volume machine, automatic on-line options include multiple copy paper formats with auto switching from one paper tray to another; cover and divider sheet insertion; and collating, folding, punching, stapling and heat binding.

Because of the potential in the small- to medium-size business or department that has, until now, had to rely on external print shops, the competition is getting fierce, with main contenders in this sector of the market now including Asea, Canon, Konica, Lanier, Minolta, Océ, Olympia, Panasonic, Ricoh, Sharp and Toshiba.

Colour copiers tend to divide into two categories: "business colour" units which normally means they are affordable and easy to use and so are suitable for general office uses, and "professional colour" machines for applications where true colour rendering and perfect registration are more important than cost.

Every manufacturer offers refinements which they hope will make their machines stand out from the crowd.

Another main trend in the copier market is towards PC-Mac computer integration to provide a scanning and Post-

Script printing facility with options including slide projectors to make copies from 35 mm slides.

An important development in this sector is the Electronics for Imaging (EFI) Fiery Controller with its PostScript capabilities that transforms a digital copier into a multifunction device capable of copying, scanning and printing full-colour images direct from a PC or Macintosh computer.

The very first UK installation linked to a ColorEdge 1550 has just been completed at law firm Denton Hall. Together with the continuous tone colour printer, it will enable the firm to create information brochures and customer newsletters on a computer and reproduce these on demand in-house. They will be able to produce an A4 colour proof in 30 seconds, or an A3 in one minute, at a cost of £35 against the £3,000 the printer used to charge for a chromalin.

But no matter how sophisticated copier and photocopier technology becomes, it seems that corporate customers are more concerned with reliability, quality and value for money than how many bells and whistles it has got, according to a survey carried out by Kodak Office Imaging. Other priorities include fast response, availability of parts, ease of telephone contact, knowledge of the customer's business and good old fashioned courtesy and helpfulness.

Julie Harnett

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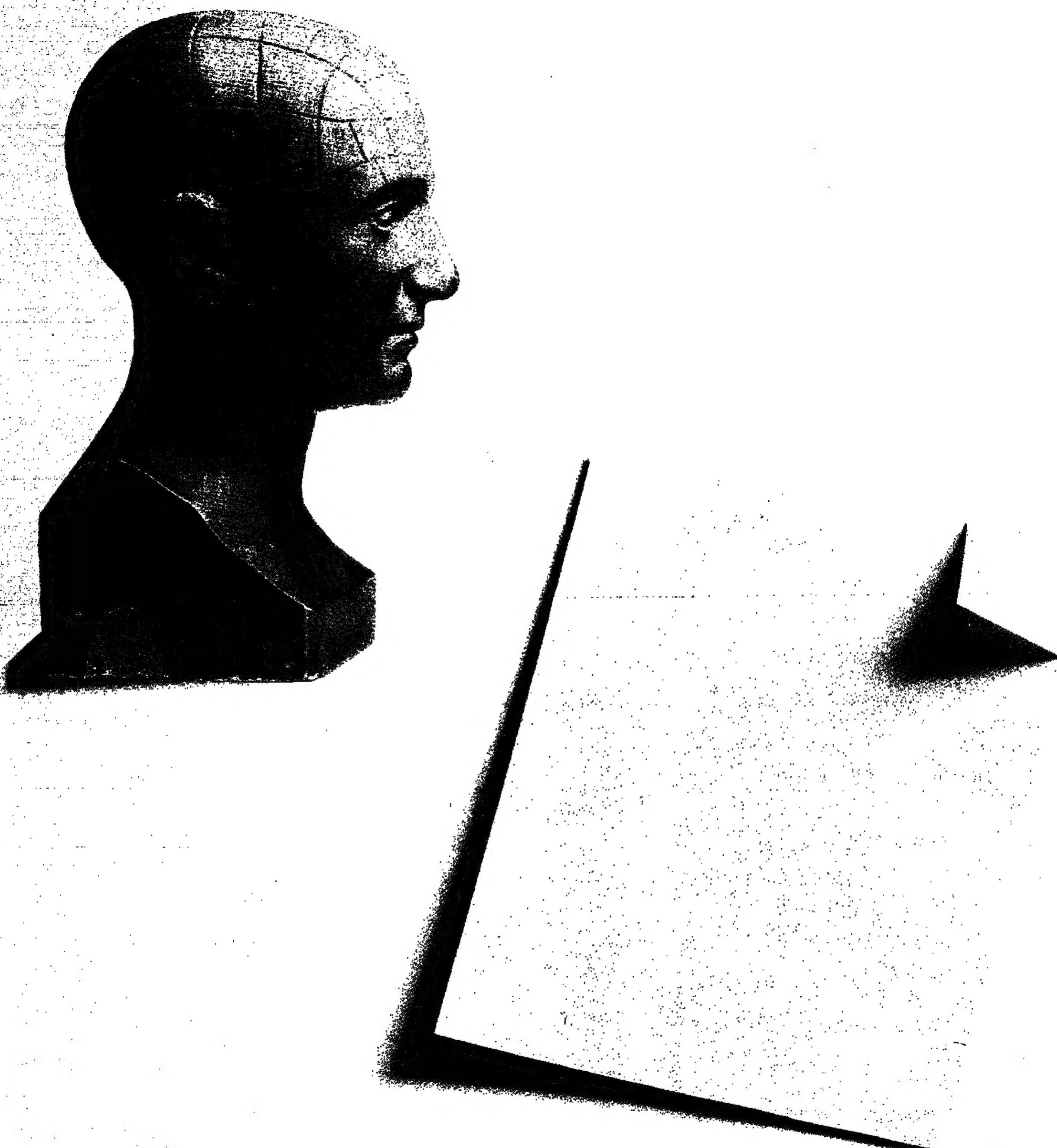
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# RANK XEROX

**For the ideas  
you're working on.**

**For the ones  
you're ready to share.**



You've got a good idea in mind. But a good idea does no one any good if you keep it to yourself. So you put it in writing and create a document. You see what your peers think. You put your best minds on it.

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That simple idea is at the heart of our business. And it's one idea that's always worth sharing, because it can make a big difference at the heart of your business.

**Rank Xerox**  
**The Document Company**

## TECHNOLOGY IN THE OFFICE 3

**R**ecession has widened the scope of facilities management. Today, more and more companies are concentrating on their core businesses and placing other services in the hands of outside contractors.

No longer is it just a question of whether to contract out catering, security and office cleaning. Big companies are starting to hand over responsibility for everything from accounting to personal computers to the corporate network.

There is nothing new about contracting out projects and services to external companies. But recently many companies have started to take a more radical approach, often with assets and/or staff being transferred to the service company. This approach (often referred to as outsourcing) is being applied to information technology (IT) and other functions, notably finance. For example, BP Exploration (Europe) recently contracted out its accounting function.

In the IT area, facilities management-outsourcing is growing at a compound annual rate of 18.5 per cent in Europe, according to Mr Morgan David of the International Data Corporation. IDC predicts that the European market will be worth \$4.9bn by 1996. Two associated benefits of facilities management (FM) are that it can cut costs and increase business focus. J.P. Morgan, the US bank, and US razor company Gillette, have both opted for a new but fast-growing branch of facilities management - managed networks. They have handed over the management of their international data networks to BT in a move to cut the costs of their existing operations and streamline.

J.P. Morgan's five-year agreement, worth about \$20m, is expected to save the company \$12.5m in operating expenses. Mr Rick Manser, Gillette's communications manager, says that opting for a managed network "gives Gillette the ability to continue to focus on our consumer product lines rather than expending time, money and effort on international data networking."

FM is not only attractive to commercial companies. Public sector organisations such as local authorities and government departments are also turning to FM. For example, Berkshire County Council has contracted out its printing to Kodak Facilities Management and cut costs by about 15 per cent.

Berkshire County Coun-

OFFICE staff have not traditionally expected to suffer serious, disabling injuries at work in the way that construction workers often have.

Yet there is now overwhelming evidence that white-collar workers face dangers when they sit at their desks. These dangers can have serious implications for incautious employers who may face a flood of damages claims or productivity setbacks as a result of high levels of absence.

A machine operator at Vauxhall Motors in Luton who contracted repetitive strain injury (RSI) and had to give up her job was awarded a record £29,617 in damages and loss of earnings by a judge at Luton County Court earlier this year.

A recent case involving BT keyboard operators granted damages of £5,000 but a loss of earnings award has not yet been decided. In another case, GMB general union received £57,000 between them for loss of earnings.

In 1988-90 more than 750,000 people took sickness absence because of work-related illness, and some 8,000 lives and 27m working days in Europe are lost each year due to work-related accidents and ill health, according to the Health and Safety Executive. The HSE believes the problem is growing.

The visual display unit has invaded desk space and become virtually ubiquitous in offices in the developed world. However, the revolution in equipment was not

## FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

## A more radical approach

cil, which saved money by contracting out its computers and telecoms services last year, has just decided to contract out the management and support of its PCs and local area networks. The £250,000-a-year PC deal includes the transfer of six PC support staff from Hertfordshire County Council to UK company Finet. They join the 45 staff transferred under the earlier £2m-a-year FM deal.

Cost-savings are not the only benefits of opting for FM. Some

companies contract out services because they are not happy with the quality of in-house equivalents, or because they want greater flexibility.

"Many opt for FM while they are transferring from one technology to another," says Mr Peter Falconer, associate director of computer services company Hoskyns.

For example, UK retailer Mothercare contracted out its computers to Hoskyns, while it

was transferring from IBM mainframes to smaller IBM systems (AS/400s). It needed to keep its old systems running while it was developing software to run on the new machines.

But despite the benefits of FM, there are a number of risks:

• Loss of ad hoc services: Although competitive tendering is likely to keep down the costs of the contract, suppliers may use changing requirements as a way of improving

on margins. Extras not specified in the contract (such as extra computer power) may work out very expensive.

• Loss of in-house expertise:

Once services have been contracted out, it may be difficult to bring them back in-house.

This is especially true of computer services.

• High costs for extras:

Although competitive tendering is likely to keep down the costs of the contract, suppliers may use changing requirements as a way of improving

outcomes. Before contracting out an activity, companies should ask themselves how it affects their competitive strength in their main markets. US researchers Frost & Sullivan say those activities which are unique to the company or based on company-specific skills provide competitive advantage and should be kept in-house. But if an activity is mature (such as printing or staff catering), outside suppliers can probably manage it just as well and at lower cost.

• Limited redress for poor service:

Unless the level of service required by the user company is spelt out in the contract, it may be difficult to get redress for poor performance. Or the redress may be insufficient if a crucial business function is affected.

• Loss of confidentiality:

One of the most recent public sector organisations to consider computer FM is the UK's Inland Revenue. It is talking to a number of suppliers about the possibility of contracting out the computer processing of tax returns.

However, critics of the proposal argue that information about taxpayers is too sensitive to be handled by private sector staff.

And some commercial companies resist FM (or restrict it to certain areas) because they worry that confidential data will get into the wrong hands.

FM suppliers counter that their procedures are often stricter than those of their clients.

• Loss of competitive advan-

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One reason for outsourcing is a belief in market forces and healthy competition. But Wainwright warns: "Some companies take it to extremes and encourage individual managers to replace internal work with external contracts at will. This can lead to fragmentation, with many external suppliers providing overlapping services, and failure to obtain the best deal for the whole company."

Jola Shillingford

## Make way for the virtual office

SOME companies are using the opportunity of contracting out services to reduce what is offered, says Mr Keith Lawson, design director of the Business Design Group.

Mr Lawson, who helps companies plan and run their office environments, says:

"Companies who contract-out space planning to us are starting to talk about the virtual office and ask whether everyone needs their own desk."

The answer is 'No'. People who are out

of the office a lot don't need to come back to the same workspace as long as they have access to office services.

"They will live out of two briefcases - one containing work and the other containing the things which personalise their desk, such as family photos."

Dr Frank Duffy, chairman of DEGW, an architectural practice which specialises in designing the working environment, says: "With the proliferation of information technology, the penny has dropped that

you can intensify space use. Many of our clients including IBM (UK), PA Consulting and Arthur Andersen, have started to apply the concept of time-sharing to office space.

"With imagination, one workspace, costing over £5,000 a year can be used by three or even five people."

The Responsible Workplace, a multi-client study produced by DEGW and the Building Research Establishment, will be published by Butterworths in February 1993.

Jola Shillingford

## ERGONOMICS

## Work-related illnesses

matched with a revolution in working practices or office furniture and it is small wonder that office workers have found their new equipment created new problems.

The most well known and the biggest of the new maladies is musculo-skeletal injury, in particular Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI), the painful, sometimes disabling disorder that affects necks, shoulders, arms and hands.

In the US, RSI now accounts for more than half of all reported work-related injuries. In the UK, it is a growing problem among white-collar workers affecting professionals, secretarial staff, computer users and high-volume data handlers.

RSI refers to a variety of complaints.

Sufferers report symptoms ranging from mild discomfort to severe, disabling pain which affects their personal as well as their professional lives.

Some disorders, such as tenosynovitis

and capsulitis are well understood by the growing army of experts. Others are less easy to diagnose and tend to be lumped together under vague headings such as damaged nerve tissue. None is easy to cure.

But RSI is avoidable and employers who have made concerted efforts to reorganise their office environments have seen dramatic decreases in its incidence.

Employers who have ignored the risks to their staff will soon have an additional reason to keep those risks to a minimum. By the end of this year the UK must have domestic legislation which meets the requirements of a European Community directive.

The legislation is highly specific. It refers to "display screen equipment" but excludes computer systems open to the public and automatic teller machines in banks and building societies, as well as calculators, typewriters and lap-top users

not typically used for long periods.

The directive applies to the workstation as a whole, covering chairs, desks, modems and printers. These references and a catch-all heading of the "immediate work environment" means employers will have to think carefully about the implications of all office environment.

It is not just the physical pieces of equipment which employers must ensure comply with the directive; humidity, lighting, radiation and noise are all addressed.

Employers will be obliged to conduct workplace evaluations to check they do not present health risks to their staff. The directive specifies that screen workers must be properly trained, allowed free eye

testing and any necessary glasses and that screen work must be interspersed with periods of activity or breaks.

RSI is not the only risk to white-collar workers. There is the potentially fatal legionnaires disease which lurks in convenient recesses provided by modern air conditioning systems and elsewhere.

Then there is sick building syndrome, less dangerous but more difficult to tackle because it is hard to diagnose and no one really knows for sure what causes it.

It can affect staff in ways which even they do not recognise immediately but which can have a serious effect on both

their health and the health of their businesses. The World Health Organisation estimates the syndrome affects a third of European and North American offices. The House of Commons Environment Committee put the annual cost to the UK economy alone as between £300m and more than £500m a year in absenteeism.

A wide variety of symptoms range from sore throats, dry eyes (some staff have been unable to wear contact lenses), headaches and coughs through exacerbated menstrual disorders to lethargy, dizziness and depression.

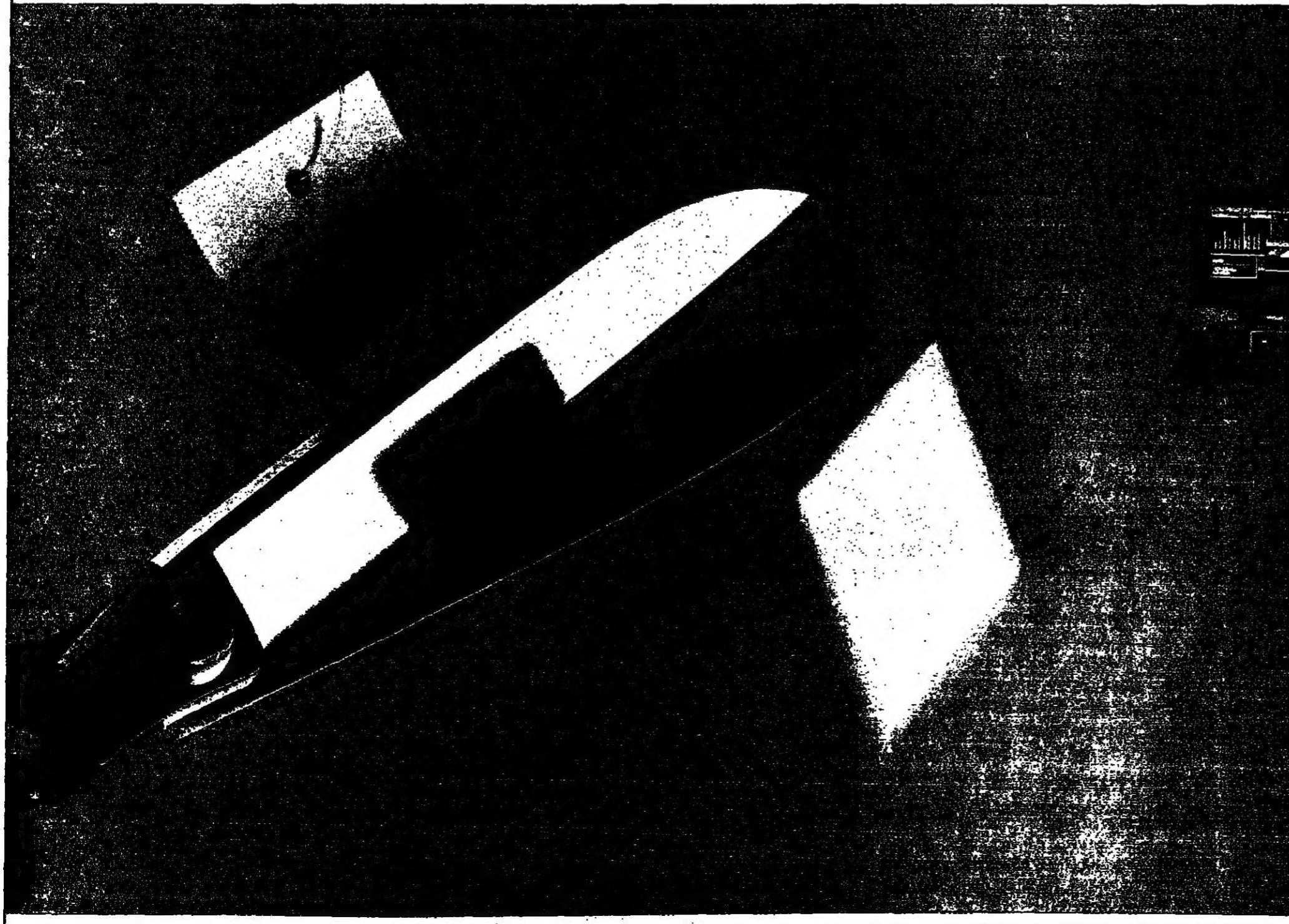
Sufferers typically report that their symptoms only show up when they are at work and disappear as soon as they leave. Their close friends and families appear to be immune.

The Health and Safety Executive takes a gloomy view. It recently concluded that 20 years of research had failed to uncover any definite cure or cause for the condition. The HSE is funding research at London University which is comparing the sickness and absence data of more than 10,000 office-based civil servants with measurements of environmental factors and building maintenance work.

Evidence suggests that stress at work is also an important cause of sickness absence. The HSE believes occupational stress could have an impact on physical health.

Catherine Milton

At \$495\* HP has trimmed the price of the 386 PC, but what else have we cut?



Let's be honest. Low cost PCs and Hewlett-Packard would not feature highly in many people's word association lists.

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